D I M I N U T I V E S

"... io sono nella lingua come il

sorriso sul volto umano."

(de Amicis : 1905:226)

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UNIV. EDINBURGEN. EX BIBL.

For Ruthie

Declaration

This thesis has been composed by myself and is entirely my own work.

Contents

	Page
Table of contents	iv
Abstract	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Abbreviations	ix
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Definitions	1
1.2 Attitudes to Diminutives	2
1.3 Types of Diminutive	6
1.4 Aims of this Study	8
2. Previous Studies	9
2.1 Grimm (1831)	9
2.2 Grimm - 1900	15
2.3 1900 - 1920	16
2.4 Polzin (1901)	16
2.5 Wrede (1908)	20
2.6 1920 - 1945	22
2.7 1945 - 1965	26
2.8 1965 - 1985	34
3. Meaning and Use	39
3.1 Introduction	39
3.2 'Smallness' vs. 'Emotion'	40
3.3 Subjective diminutives	49
3.4 Hypocoristics	51

Page

3.5 'Immature' 52

3.6 'Origin' or 'Offspring' 54

3.7 'Relatedness' 55

3.8 'Likeness', 'Similarity' 56

3.9 Other areas of meaning 58

3.10 Grammatical function 63

3.11 Diminutives from other lexical categories 64

3.12 Use 78

4. Morphology 92

4.1 Introduction 92

4.2 Diminutive formation 92

4.3 Suffixation 93

4.4 Prefixation 100

4.5 Reduplication 103

4.6 Modification 106

4.7 Subtraction 114

5. Sound Symbolism 118

5.1 Introduction 118

5.2 Sapir 120

5.3 Chastaing (1964) 122

5.4 Fischer-Jørgensen 123

5.5 More data 126

5.6 Counterexamples 128

5.7 Ultan (1978) 130

5.8 Palatal and palato-alveolar consonants 131

5.9 Language acquisition 138

	Page
6. Diminutive and the Grammar	142
6.1 Diminutives and rules; a sample problem from Dutch	142
6.2 Productivity	156
6.3 Diminutive in the Grammar	167
6.4 Diminutive suffixes in Standard English	175
7. Some Diachronic Aspects of Diminutives	180
7.1 Diminutives in Antiquity	180
7.2 A brief survey of diminutives in Romance	185
7.3 A brief survey of diminutives in Germanic	188
7.4 The origin of diminutives	199
7.5 Diachrony and the sound-symbolism theory	206
7.6 "Fashion" in diminutives	207
8. Conclusions and Universals	212
8.1 Introduction	212
8.2 Previously established universals	213
8.3 New universals	214
8.4 Other conclusions	224
8.5 The maps	225
Appendix A : Data	227
Bibliographies	444
I. Bibliography of Works on Diminutives	445
II. Other Works Consulted	463

Abstract

Despite renewed interest in morphological issues in recent times, the diminutive has largely been ignored, due, in part, to the lack of a comprehensive introduction to the topic. The present thesis aims to remedy this situation. The diminutive is studied by considering different aspects separately; thus there are chapters dealing with meaning (Chapter 3), form (Chapter 4), the use of sounds (Chapter 5), history (Chapter 7) and the way in which diminutives could be integrated into a grammar (Chapter 6). At every stage the arguments are linked to current theories and models in linguistics. The discussion is based on data from over fifty languages (see Appendix A). Although most of this material has been collected from written sources in various languages, so much data specifically on diminutives has never before been available in one place and in one language. Such a large and varied data-base has made it possible to use a more universal approach as patterns and trends emerge which could not have been recognised in a more limited study on a single language or a small group of closely related languages. These universal trends are dealt with specifically in Chapter 8. Moreover, a number of new facts about diminutives in individual languages have emerged from this study. In this respect the findings concerning modern Standard English are perhaps of particular interest. A number of maps accompany the text. One of these, introducing Appendix A, attempts for the first time to present the synthetic diminutive as it manifests itself in the languages of Western and Central Europe.

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Abbreviations

Afr.	Afrikaans
Ar.	Arabic
Arg.Sp.	Argentine Spanish
Bas.	Basque (Euskera)
Br.Por.	Brazilian Portuguese
Bre.	Breton
Bul.	Bulgarian
Cab.	Cabraniego dialect of Sp.
Cat.	Catalan
Ch.Sp.	Chilean Spanish
Cz.	Czech
Dan.	Danish
Du.	Dutch
Ec.Sp.	Ecuadorian Spanish
Eng.	(Standard) English
Fern.	Fernandian
Fr.	French
Fri.	Frisian
Friul.	Friulan, dialect of Rh.
Ger.	German
Gr.	Greek
Grld.	Greenland
Hun.	Hungarian
Ice.	Icelandic
IE.	Indo-European
Ir.	Irish (Gaelic)
It.	Italian
Jap.	Japanese
Lap.	Lappish
Lat.	Latin
Lat.Am.Sp.	Latin American Sp.
Latv.	Latvian
Lit.	Lithuanian
(M)LG	(Middle) Low German
MHG	Middle High German
M.Du.	Middle Dutch
Mal.	Maltese
N.E. or NE	Northeast
NE.	New English
NEY.	North East Yiddish
NHG	New High German
Nw.	Norwegian
Oc.	Occitan
OE.	Old English
OED.	Oxford English Dictionary
OHG.	Old High German
ON.	Old Norse
OSax.	Old Saxon/Anglosaxon
Por.	Portuguese

Que.	Quechua
Rh.	Rhaetic
Rum./Rom.	Romanian
Rus.	Russian
Sc.Gae.	Scottish Gaelic
Sco.	Scots
Sp.	Spanish
Surs.	Sursilvan, dialect of Rh.
S.W.	Southwest
Sw.Ger.	Swiss German
Swa.	Swahili
Tib.	Tibetan
Tig.	Tigré
W.Fri.	West Frisian
Wel.	Welsh
WY.	West Yiddish
Yid.	Yiddish

1. Introduction

1.1 Definitions

According to Bayle (1975:182) "Toutes les langues usent de diminutifs". Even if the existence of diminutives in language is not a universal it certainly is a near-universal (cf. Chapter 8). Every language has some way of referring to limited size; for 'smallness' is indeed the first meaning that springs to mind when one thinks of diminutives. There are, however, other - usually "emotional" elements - that are equally important (cf. Chapter 3). The following definitions recognise this fact.

According to Hartmann and Stork (1972) Dictionary of Language and Linguistics, p.66, "diminutive" is "A form of a word, usually made by the addition of a suffix with the meaning 'little' or 'small', ... This reference to size is often transferred to a term of endearment, ...". Marouzeau (1951) Lexique de la terminologie linguistique, gives the following definition. "Mot ou élément de formation (d'ordinaire suffixe) qui convient à l'expression de la petitesse, éventuellement avec une nuance soit péjorative soit caressante".

Grimm (1831:664) gives a more general definition: "Diminution oder verkleinerung findet statt, wenn durch eine in dem wort selbst vorgehende veränderung dem begrif an seiner vollen kraft etwas benommen wird". It is important in any definition to include this affective element as it is such a prominent feature of diminutives in virtually all the languages studied in the present thesis. So important is this aspect that in many cases the meaning of 'smallness' becomes relatively unimportant (Chapter 3).

The notion of smallness has to be present to some extent, though,for the form to qualify as a diminutive. An expression without any notion of smallness is not a diminutive, while on the other hand there are diminutives - albeit very few - which refer to smallness only. I therefore propose the following definition: The term diminutive is used to refer to any system whereby the form of a word or words is changed for the purpose of referring to smallness**, usually associated with an expression of endearment or contempt**. This definition covers the synthetic diminutive primarily, which is the type normally referred to by the term "diminutive" in most languages. In some cases we may want to include both synthetic and analytic diminutives - the latter involving the use of an adjective meaning 'small' or 'little' - in which case the definition might require some minor modifications (cf. 3.2). On the whole the present study is limited to synthetic diminutives with the occasional excursion into closely related areas such as hypocoristics (i.e. "pet-names").

1.2 Attitudes to Diminutives

Few linguistic elements have caused more controversy than diminutives. The very fact that they are optional and thus can be used at will has enabled individual speakers and even entire speech communities to make diminutive use subject to fashion. In some periods in history diminutives have become so popular that a reaction against them seemed inevitable. This may be illustrated by the case of French.

During the medieval period diminutives became increasingly popular in French. This trend peaked in the works of the Pléiade in the 16th century, their love of diminutives having been due to

a combination of a desire to reflect popular language as well as Greek and Latin styles. Hasselrot (1957:213) gives the following line by Belleau (1528-1577) as an example:

Amelette Ronsardelette, mignonnelette doucelette...

The backlash came in the 17th century, when Vaugelas wrote in his Remarques sur la langue françoise (1647): "Les diminutifs ne sont plus en usage dans nostre langue". This reflected wishful thinking on his part and perhaps the language of the court, rather than a real situation in the language at large. Nevertheless the controversy continued. Mlle. de Gournay, Montaigne's niece, wrote about diminutives in 1627: "Quel meurtre il faudrait commettre en nostre langue pour la sevrer de telles façons de parler". She was supporting a lost cause. In 1673 Father Bouhours, S.J. wrote (from Hasselrot 1957:215): "Y a-t-il rien de moins sérieux que ces diminutifs qui lui (the Italian language) sont si familiers? Ne dirait-on pas qu'elle ait dessein de faire rire avec ses fanciulletto, fanciullino ... Les fontelette, montagnette, oyselet ruisselet, qui estoient des délicatesses dans le stile de nos vieux Auteurs, ne se peuvent supporter dans le langage d'aujourd'hui..." During the 18th century the reaction against diminutives became even stronger. The article on diminutives in l'Encyclopédie advises against their use and Voltaire wrote in a letter to the Italian Deodati de Tovazzi of 24th January 1761 and quoted by Hasselrot (1957:216):

> "Nous n'avons pas de diminutifs; nous en avions autant que vous du temps de Marot, de Rabelais, et de Montaigne; mais cette puérilité nous a paru indigne d'une langue ennoblie par les Pascal, les Bossuet, les Fénelon, les Pellisson, les Corneille, ...etc."

This attitude was not limited to -ot(te), and -et(te), it also affected petit (cf. Hérisson 1956:113ff). During the 19th and

20th centuries a more tolerant attitude prevails, but even Gide could still write in Thésée (1946) "J'ai horreur des diminutifs".

During the 18th and 19th centuries the French attitude had some effect in Italy and Spain, although it did not have any real impact in either country. In Italy De Amicis' l'idioma gentile (1905:226) fully supported the use of diminutives, provided it was done in moderation. He let the diminutive speak for itself:

> "... non è mia colpa se molti seccano il prossimo e mi fanno prendere in uggia con gl'ini, con gli etti, e con gli ucci...; che il vizio non è in me, ma in chi mi violenta e mi snatura ... Perchè io sono nella lingua come il sorriso sul volto umano."
>
> ('it isn't my fault if many people annoy others by using me ad nauseam with their ini, their etti and their ucci...; the vice is not mine, but of those who abuse and misrepresent me ... For I am in language what a smile is on the human face').

In Spain there is a long tradition of defending diminutives against French influence. Saint Theresa used many diminutives in her writings, which are largely contemporary with those of the Pléiade. Under French influence in the 17th and 18th centuries some people react against their use, but none of these ever goes beyond an individual's personal views.

Later on, comparisons with French were often made. Hasselrot (272-3) quotes from Capmany (1786), who points out the lack of subtlety of French which does not possess the diminutives and augmentatives which in Spanish ...

> "...modifican con tanta variedad y fina gradación una misma idea general ... Estas sí que son "nuances" (por hablar en francés filosófico), de que carece esta lengua de los filósofos, y abunda con maravillosas diferencias y delicadezas en la española."
>
> ('they modify with such variety and fine gradation one general idea ... These are "nuances" (to speak in philosophical French) indeed, which that language of philosophers lacks and with whose marvellous distinctions and subtleties Spanish is so richly endowed").

In German some resistance to diminutives developed during the 17th and 18th centuries as a - perhaps understandable - response to the excesses of earlier periods. Philipp von Zesen (1641) Deutscher Helikon, Wittenberg, p.52 wrote:

> "Hiermit ist zu merken, dass solche Deminutiva in Versen, auch wohl sonst nicht wohl können gebraucht werden, weil die Rede ganz unannehmlich und kindisch dadurch gemacht wird, sonderlich aber die auf -lein ausgehen, wo es nicht Lust halber oder aus Mangel anderer Worte geschieht."

This was written at a time when - subsequent to Luther's Bible translation - the northern and central dialects gained in importance at the expense of the southern dialects, which are richer in diminutives. At the same time the central German suffix -chen became more important.

This situation continues virtually unchanged to this day in Standard German.

The dislike of diminutives is not limited to France, nor to the 17th and 18th centuries. Otto Jespersen still wrote in his Growth and structure of the English Language (1938:9-10):

> "It is worth observing, for instance, how few diminutives the language has and how sparingly it uses them. English in this respect forms a strong contrast to Italian ..., German..., Dutch... The continual recurrence of these endings without any apparent necessity cannot but produce the impression that the speakers are innocent, childish, genial beings with no great business capacities or seriousness in life. But in English there are very few of these fondling endings; ..., of course, there is -y, -ie ... which corresponds exactly to the fondling suffixes of other languages; but its implication in English is restricted to the nursery and it is hardly ever used by grown-up people except in speaking to children. Besides, this ending is more Scotch than English, and the Scotch with all their deadly earnestness, especially in religious matters, are, perhaps, greater children than the English."

Even in 1938 such views were already outdated and Bulloch had spoken in defence of the Scots diminutive - much as de Amicis did for Italian - in 1924 (p.151):

> "Why, indeed, should the Scot abjure his thriftiness and cripple his vocabulary by casting aside an instrument of expression which saves the inspiration of his childhood from fading into the light of common day: an instrument so gracious, so expressive, so tender, so humorous; instinct with an element of that criticism of life which Matthew Arnold defined as the essence of poetry. The diminutive in our vivid vernacular makes all of us poets in prose, whether we know it or not, and the spirit of poetry, more than anything else, gives us greater power to face the prose of a work-a-day world and has made Scotsmen what they are."

Nevertheless, the attitudes of Jespersen and others may well be to blame for the fact that - apart from some studies by Germans and Scandinavians up until 1910 - the only works published on diminutives in English are Langenfelt (1941) and Von Lindheim (1970) - and the latter deals only with one suffix in Old English. The English-speaking world has shown a marked lack of interest in diminutives not only in foreign languages, but even in English itself.

1.3 Types of Diminutive

As was indicated earlier, this study deals primarily with synthetic diminutives. Analytic diminutives are mentioned where appropriate as are hypocoristics of various kinds. Analytic diminutives are especially prominent in French, English and Welsh and therefore they have to be included in the relevant sections in Appendix A. In addition there is some discussion of the contrastive use of analytic and synthetic diminutives in Chapter 3. The use of diminutive affixes to form hypocoristics is so widespread that it may well be a universal. For this reason hypocoristics are normally included in the data without further comment. They do however form quite a distinct class and a detailed analysis would go beyond the scope of the present study which deals primarily with diminutives. A number of specialised types of diminutive emerge from the data.

First of all there are some languages where a split has occurred between objective synthetic diminutives and subjective synthetic diminutives,[1] although this is rarely very marked. Secondly there are languages which reserve certain suffixes for referring to young animals.

We should perhaps also distinguish between a morphological diminutive and a semantic diminutive. Not every word with a diminutive form has a diminutive meaning. An almost classic example is Ger. Mädchen 'girl' without any diminutive notion, but with a clearly diminutive form. In many cases diminutive formation is used in this way to expand the lexicon with words that may be diminutive in form, but with a meaning quite unrelated to that of the words from which they must originally have been derived. In some cases these base-words have even disappeared thus leaving in the lexicon a word which is diminutive in form, but whose non-diminutive counterpart no longer exists.

This sort of situation has on occasion led to back-formations from the "diminutive" form. (See Van Haeringen (1975); also discussed in Dutch Section of Appendix A.)

Finally we should perhaps mention augmentatives. On the whole I have been careful to avoid them, mainly to keep the length of this study within reasonable limits. In some cases, however, augmentatives have to be considered because of the way in which they interrelate with diminutives in a particular language. Augmentatives, like diminutives are such a wide and varied field that they really deserve to be considered separately.

1.4 Aims of this Study

Previous studies of diminutives, outlined in Chapter 2 have always concentrated on describing diminutives in one dialect or language or, alternatively in a small number of related languages. In some cases a brief review of the diminutive around the world is included. In this study I have tried to look at a greater sample of languages than has been attempted before. As a result some aspects of the topic have to be treated more superficially than can be done in a more detailed study of one language or dialect. The advantages of using a larger sample of data, however, outweigh the disadvantages in this case. Patterns and trends emerge which could not have been recognised in a more limited study. Some of these will be indicated in the following chapters and they will be tied together as it were in Chapter 8, which deals specifically with any universals that emerge about diminutive as a category. Originally this too was intended as a much more limited study, covering only a small number of W. European languages. Increasingly, however, as research progressed the lack of and need for a general introductory study to the field was felt.

To fill this void, almost imperceptibly, our research began to move in that direction as more and more areas had to be tackled where we had originally expected to be able to rely on other sources. I hope, therefore that the present study will fill the gap.

Footnote

1. For this terminology see Chapter 3.

2. Previous Studies

When one looks at virtually any grammar or description of a language, diminutives are mentioned and usually no more than that. A number of people have taken a greater interest in diminutives as is clear from the bibliography of works on diminutives included in this thesis. A few of these, however, stand out and it is really only a sample of these that I can discuss in this chapter.

2.1 Grimm

The first truly useful study of diminutives is Chapter 8 in Part III of Grimm's Deutsche Grammatik of 1831. Grimm seems to have been the first to take a real interest in the phenomenon of diminutives. Chapter 8 of Part III of his grammar is completely devoted to an analysis of diminutives. Although he deals mainly with German and related languages, he also includes sections on Greek, Latin and Romance and even mentions Sanskrit; Slavic and Baltic languages are mentioned too.

On p.664 the chapter starts with a definition of the field:

> "Diminution[1] oder verkleinerung findet statt, wenn durch eine in dem wort selbst vorgehende veränderung dem begriff an seiner vollen kraft etwas benommen wird."

So he specifically limits his study to synthetic diminutives.

He is one of the first to recognise that diminutives not only refer to objects or people of limited size, but that they are used primarily for endearment:

> "Das diminutivum hat nicht nur den ausdruck des kleinen, geringen, sondern des lieblichen, kosenden. Daher finden sich diminutive formen mitunder bei grossen, erhabnen, heiligen, erwünschten, selbst gefürchteten gegenständen angewand, denen man sich vertraulich nähern und etwas freundliches abgewinnen will."

He divides the Germanic diminutive suffixes into two types. The L-type and the K-type, determined by their dominating consonant. Often a former inflexional N is present and the vowel is usually <i>, which he says is the most appropriate vowel for the job (665).[2]

Then he considers the different suffixes, their history and use, etc. The first is the -l/-il suffix. Grimm traces these from Gothic:

magus - magula

mavi - mavilo

barn - barnilo

In Gothic these diminutives did not change the gender. That was a later development.

They were also used for hypocoristic derivation:

Vulfs - Vulfila

Atta - Attila 'father' - 'little father'

In OHG these suffixes survived, initially without any change. After a while the L-suffixes all became neuter in gender. Sometimes umlaut also took place (668/9). From these OHG diminutives several MHG suffixes developed: -ele, -el, -ili, -elin. Syncope became common with multisyllabic words. Umlaut became widespread in MHG. In NHG these suffixes developed into -lein. In many High German dialects the older suffixes survive (673). Again he stresses the emotional aspect of these suffixes when he says:

> "... wenn der mann fraueli, die frau mandli anredet, so liegt darin nicht der begrif kleine frau, kleiner mann, sondern was wir durch unser nhd. liebes weib, lieber mann ausdrücken (674; examples from Swiss German).

Next he discusses the -k/-ik suffix. Although he has found a few examples in OHG, they seem to be much more common in Saxon, especially in names: Manniko, Huniko, Wendiko; Anglo-saxon: Gifëca, Bëadëca, etc. (676). He then links the English -ock suffix in bullock, hillock, etc. with this same suffix-type.

In MDu there is the -kin/-ken alongside -lĪn, and this suffix survives in some dialects of Dutch and in Low German. Most dialects of Dutch have adopted -je, probably derived from -ke(n). In Modern German -chen, also a version of the K-suffix, has become widespread in the northern and central dialects. There are some cases where the two suffix-types have amalgamated. Some of these consist of K+L, for example OHG huonichlin and Dutch scharminkel; (681/2) others consist of L+K, e.g. jüngelchen, wägelchen (682).[3]

Another way of forming diminutives is with the suffix -ing/-ling. These imply not so much smallness as descent, relatedness. They are therefore used to refer to someone's son and other descendants. Thus OHG Charalinc is the son of Charal (682). Extended to objects we get for example silabarlinc, a coin made of silver; i.e. 'descended from' or 'related to', 'made of silver'.

Related to this suffix is -ink. All these suffixes only form masculine diminutives. They still survive to some extent in the Scandinavian languages:

Nw. bôk - boeklîngr

Dan. bid - bidling, billing

Some examples can be found in English; duckling, etc.

They are quite productive still in Mecklenburg and Pomerania:

kind - kinning

hand - hänning

Grimm is not sure about the gender of these forms.

Finally there are the diminutives marked by a single -i. Grimm found a few examples in OHG, e.g. magat - magati; but it does not seem to have been very productive, despite its recognised diminutive force (684). In the modern language, Swiss German uses it in some words:

aug - äugi

fuess - füessi

The same suffix is of course found in Scots.[4]

Dutch uses -je (and its allomorphs -pje/-tje) and similarly some Swiss dialects use -ji/-je, of which Grimm lists -tschi, -schi, -ti as allomorphs (685).

Grimm doubts whether there are any true diminutive adjectives in German. Most adjectives when supplied with a diminutive suffix seem to **be confined to nominal use**; Liebchen, or Du. kleintje; so, he says:

> "Genau betrachtet gibt es keine verkleinerten adj. in unsere sprache, wenigstens in der schriftsprache nicht." (687).

Some dialects, however do have the facility for adjectives to form diminutives (see also German Section in Appendix A). Adverbs normally survive diminution. Most of his examples are from Dutch and Low German, though; e.g. stilliken in LG and stilletjes in Dutch. He has also found zusämmchen schlafen in a written source (688).

Grimm maintains that the following verbs also have a certain diminutive value:

läcHeIn (< lachen)

spötteln (< spotten)

schnitzeln (< schnitzen)

streicheln (< streichen) (see also 3.11.6)

The -il suffix in this form comes from an earlier OHG -ilôn (689). Especially certain dialects use this system very productively, e.g. 17th C Westphalian: eteken 'eat+dim+inf.' He also classes certain short or hypocoristic forms of personal names as diminutives. These forms of the type

Fritz (< Friedrich)

Heinz (< Heinrich).

are very old and in some cases the diminutive sense has been lost. It is usually achieved by adding -z to a shortened form of the name. In some cases another diminutive form is derived from these:

Heinz - Heinzel

One MHG poet was even known as: klein Heinzelîn von Costenz. We can only speculate about this gentleman's size. He gives some OHG examples too:

Lanzo (< Landefredus)

Winizo (< Winifredus)

Women's names using this form are now rare; they were once common enough:

e.g. Hizila (< Hiltipurh) (692)

In Saxon a T corresponds to the HG Z , e.g. Sitto (< Sigibert)

Grimm defends his statement that these are real diminutives as follows:

> "Die völlig diminutive bedeutung dieses Z und T ergibt sich daraus, dass hin und wider auch andere diminutivformen ebenso bei zusammengesetzten eigennamen verwendet werden..."

(e.g. Dietl, Haindl, etc. in Bavarian; quotation from p.693).

In his conclusion (694ff) he summarises the situation in Germanic thus:

> "Im goth. und hochd. herscht das verkleinernde L, im niederd. das K ... ... Einzelne dialecte zeigen entschiedne vorliebe zur diminution, andere vermeiden sie. Von den unsrigen ist ihr der niederländische am meisten zugethan, der englische und nordische abgeneigt. Unter den volksmundarten liebt vorzüglich die schweizerische und bairische zu verkleinern. Den nord. sprachen ist das lebendige mittel zur diminution geschwunden, sie müssen es durch die adj. klein oder lieb ersetzen,..." (694/5).

He also makes an attempt to explain the tendency toward neuter diminutives:

> "Diese hinneigung zum neutrum hat ohne zweifel ihren grund darin, dass das genus neutrum unverkennbare beziehung auf den begrif des kleinen und jungen zeigt, folglich die verkleinerung auszudrücken am geschicktesten scheint." (695).

He then goes on to discuss diminution in Greek, Latin and Sanskrit, where the K-suffix is most common, although diminutives in Sanskrit seem rare and underdeveloped (cf. Chapter 7). In Slavic, where K is also common, diminutives are more frequently used than in German. Even on adjectives and adverbs they are fully productive (700). Lithuanian uses both L and T, whereby L often expresses contempt and T usually implies youth and descent (701). Next he discusses the main Romance languages and how their diminutives relate to Latin. He concludes with the following statement:

> "Diminutiva scheinen in der wärme vertraulicher volkssprache zu gedeihen; die schriftsprache gibt sie nach und nach wieder auf, verwendet sie selten, oder benimmt ihnen wenigstens ihren ursprünglichen sinn." (704/5)

Finally he devotes a few paragraphs to augmentatives, which he says are most common in the Romance dialects. The most common vowels involved are A and O (705). They are also used on adjectives. He comments on the subtle shades of meaning and emotional effect

that can be achieved by combining different diminutive and augmentative suffixes, e.g.

It. cavallucciaccio

Sp. grandillón

He tries to find some parallels in the Germanic forms in -olt (OHG):

OHG egis - egisgrîmolt

MHG kobolt; NHG kobold

And also in the Dutch suffix -aard (MDu -aert).

2.2 Grimm - 1900

A few other works appear during the rest of the 19th century. These are mainly about German, its history and dialects. Two early studies on Dutch appear during this period, namely, Kern (1871) and te Winkel (1862). Landau (1896/7) is the most comprehensive work on Yiddish diminutives published until now. On the Romance languages, there are far fewer studies. Cayley (1875/6) on Italian and Quintescu (1867) on Rumanian diminutives are two of the few papers published on Romance, although there are a number of works on Latin, e.g.: Mueller (1865) and Ryhiner (1894). Some works on Latin concentrate on particular authors, like Kock (1877) and Lindsay (1892) on Plautan diminutives.

2.3 1900 - 1920

In the beginning of the 20th century the greatest activity in the field of diminutives is in the German-speaking world, although some studies of other languages do appear. There is, for example, Amunátegui-Reyes' (1904) comparison of diminutives in Chilean Spanish with the rules laid down by the Real Academia in Madrid.

Two detailed studies of diminutives in English also appear in this period. The first of these by Höge (1906) considers Middle English, while Rotzoll (1910) concentrates on Modern English with due consideration given to the regional dialects. Several other minor analyses appear, many of them concentrating on one language or dialect. Thus there is Kruisinga (1915) on Dutch and de Josselin de Jong (1903) on a Dutch dialect, Dakôhler (1906) on the German dialect of Cattenstedt, Lasch (1912) on diminutives in Mecklenburg - Vorpommern, Veit (1909) on Swabian, Odermatt (1903) on the Swiss dialect of Nidwalden, as well as various historical studies of German diminutives. For Yiddish there is the paper by Sainéan (1903). Far less is written about Romance diminutives in this period. For the Portuguese dialect of the Algarve, there is Barbosa (1913) and there are various studies of Rumanian diminutives, notable among which is Puşcariu (1899 & 1900). Various studies of Latin diminutives are produced, many of them tracing the suffixes to the modern dialects. Two works stand out during this period and these are the studies by Polzin (1901) and Wrede (1908) of diminutives in German.

2.4 Polzin

Polzin (1901) Studien zur Geschichte des Deminutivums im Deutschen is an attempt to show that diminutives developed in German under the influence of Latin. Of course diminutives did exist in Germanic and are normally used for endearment and are therefore usually found in the vocative (p.2). In addition, there is the use as an <immature> suffix as with ON -lingur and OHG -în. From the OHG period onwards a strong influence from written Latin is discernible; -lîn becomes the standard way of glossing Latin

diminutives and pseudo-diminutives i.e.: words with a diminutive form but not semantically diminutive:

> "im Grossen und Ganzen kann jedes deutsche Deminutivum der Glossen von einem lateinischen Deminutivum resp. Scheindeminutivum abgeleitet werden" (p.24).

e.g.: animal names:

camelus > kämlîn

plant names:

gariofillim > negelîn > Nelke

tools and clothing:

anulus > fingerlîn

cingulum > gurtelîn

food and drink:

sorbitiuncula > süplin, muosilîn (p.29)

In literature which is not based on a Latin translation, diminutives are rare and are used almost always for animate beings. This dependence on Latin continues in the MHG period, albeit that more examples now occur of diminutives in the glosses without an equivalent in the original Latin; these remain rare however. During this period, -lîn becomes increasingly popular because of its facility to rhyme with many words. Polzin (43-44) gives quite a few examples of these rhyme-induced diminutives. In MHG the following meaning areas produce diminutives (44ff):

animal names and plant names: carduellus > kardelîn

cuniculus > küniclîn

people: puella > magatîn > meitlîn

domicella > frouwelîn

food and drink: these diminutives were especially common in the influential monastery of St Gall in Switzerland e.g.:

sorbitiuncula > muasilin

hence: grützmüeselîn, apfelmüeselîn, etc. (> müesli)

clothing and jewellery: superpellicium > Kôrröckelîn

mantellus > mentellîn

coronula > krenzlîn

tools, ritual objects etc: cimbalum > glöckelîn, glochichen

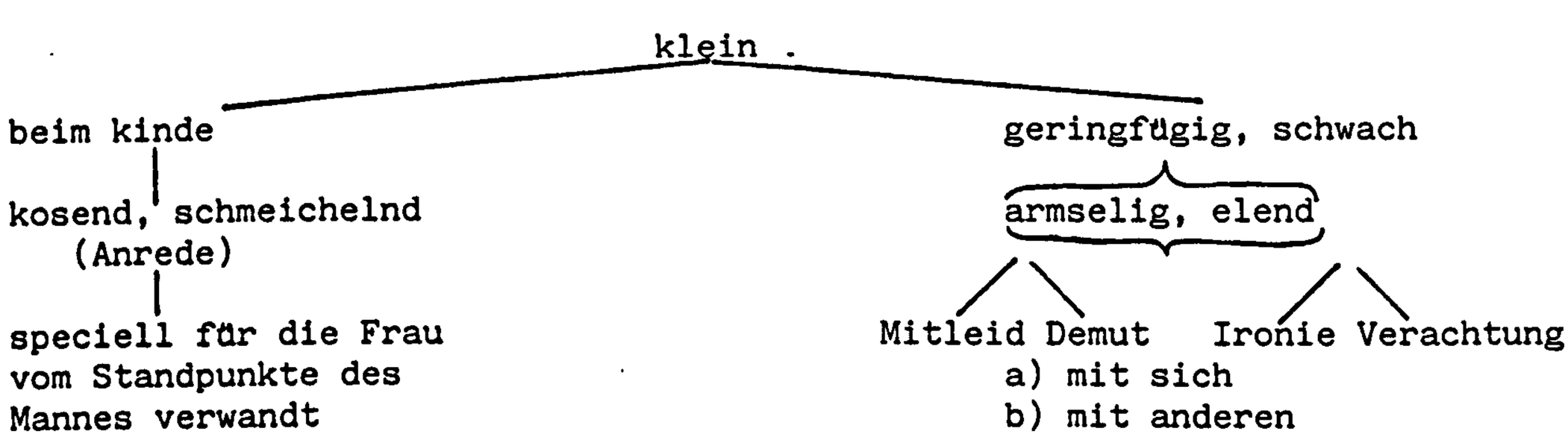
ceraculum > Kerzelîn

discipuli > schûlerlîn

epistola > brievelîn

collectives: fasciculus > bündelîn , büschelîn

Examples from MLG lend further support to Polzin's theory of Latin influence. On the other hand, unlike OHG, MHG has developed a productive creative diminutive system of its own. In OHG only an endearing and 'immature' sense could be expressed by diminutives. In MHG this has expanded (p.52)



So we now see a completely developed diminutive system. The use of diminutives by men to describe women is especially productive in the works of the medieval "Minnensänger". Expecially the later works are full of diminutives e.g.: from Wolkenstein:

mund mündlîn gekust

zung an zünglîn, prüstlîn an prust

pauch an

peuchlîn

rauch an

reuchlîn

According to Polzin (58-9) all these new areas have developed from the central area of 'smallness'. In MHG the synthetic diminutive is more often than not accompanied either by a negative e.g.: niht ein wörtelîn or by an adjective, especially klein. Polzin (62) suggests that klein is present because the use of the synthetic diminutive is not yet well established.

In early NHG (1450-1600) the main work is Luther's Bible translation. In his New Testament there is some evidence of influence from Greek diminutives, although on the whole the influence from Latin is far less than in the MHG period. Any Latin diminutives have by now become fully accepted - especially in the language of the church - in their diminutive form. In rhyme diminutives are still more common than elsewhere. Examples of Latin-influenced diminutives still occur in the same areas of meaning albeit that more examples are now available. Polzin lists them on pp.91-98. By now, however, diminutives have become part of the popular language and they are well established in the realm of children and the language of lovers. Especially body-parts often form diminutives. Many examples can be found in the continuing tradition of love poetry e.g.: from Wekherlin (Polzin:100):

Einig süsses Mündelein

Röter den ein Röselein

From the 17th century onwards, -chen and the central and northern dialects grow in importance. These dialects use fewer diminutives and -chen is perhaps less suitable for rhyme. As a result, a decline sets in of diminutives in the literature. This trend is supported by an increasing resistance to the use or over-use of diminutives (cf. French, see 1.2).

2.5 Wrede (1908)

This paper was published in Deutsche Dialektgeographie, a journal which supplied background material to Wenker's Sprachatlas des Deutschen Reichs (1895). Wrede's study consists of three parts. The central part is a detailed description of the diminutive map of the German Empire. It is preceded by an introduction in which Wrede discusses general observations, principles and methods. The last part is a more detailed discussion of some of the issues encountered in the map-section, including some theories about the origin and history of diminutives in German.

Wrede starts off by praising Grimm's work on diminutives, published 75 years earlier. He then points to the variation in diminutive-use over the German-speaking area. Parts of the North are virtually diminutiveless, like Scandinavia or England. Diminutive-use then increases the further South one goes until the High Germans seem to "revel" in diminutivised forms (p.73). Wrede wonders why this should be the case. He offers some answers to this question in the third part of his work. Next, he defends the fact that no actual map has been supplied with the article. He gives various reasons for this. One reason is that he wants to avoid giving what could be interpreted as "the diminutive map of German", but which is in fact only a map of the six diminutivised forms studied. He doubts whether a comprehensive diminutive map will or can ever be produced anyway (pp.74-75). Some people have made detailed maps, but only of very small dialect areas. Wrede on the other hand attempts to give a more global all-German picture, which could not be detailed enough and could therefore lead to misinterpretations (p.75). He does point out, though, that any reader, who wants a real map can easily draw one from

this description, and he gives detailed guidelines on how to set about this task (pp.76-77). He has decided not to give any phonetic transcriptions. Instead he will give as much as possible the forms as they are given on the actual questionnaires on which the study is based. The questionnaire asks informants to give the equivalents of the following sentences in their own dialects:

- Hinter unserm Hause stehen drei schöne Apfelbäumchen mit roten Äpfelchen
- Könnt ihr nicht noch ein Augenblickchen auf uns warten
- Ihr müsst ein bisschen lauter sprechen
- Habt ihr kein Stückchen weisse Seife für mich auf meinem Tische gefunden?
- Was sitzen da für Vögelchen oben auf dem Mäuerchen?
- Die Bauern hatten fünf Ochsen und neun Kühe und zwölf Schäfchen vor das Dorf gebracht

The choice of sentences was limited by the fact that they had to be chosen from the set of 40 sentences which Wenker had already selected for the other maps in the Sprachatlas, which was originally intended to cover only North and Central Germany. Augenblickchen is the least typical and therefore the most problematic. It is relatively rare in dialects anyway and its map is therefore not all that useful (p.79). Also, Mäuerchen is relatively uncommon in the dialects, although the way the informants construct it does show the productive local suffixes in use (p.79). The other examples Wrede finds quite useful, although bisschen is somewhat special in that few people would still think of it as being derived from Bissen. The study is therefore limited to the following six forms:

Mäuerchen, Stückchen, bisschen (all singular) and Bäumchen, Schäfchen, Vögelchen (all plural) and their suffixes in particular, thus avoiding any complications caused by umlauting (p.79).

The rest of the work consists of detailed descriptions of dialect maps. These maps show which suffixes are dominant in which areas. The German-speaking area on the map "The Synthetic Diminutive in Europe" (see Appendix A) is largely based on these maps. One particularly interesting suffix is the plural diminutive -lich which survives in 4 small areas in Germany (see map "The Origin of Yiddish Diminutives" Chapter 7).

2.6 1920 - 1945

In the Netherlands most of this period is dominated by a dispute between de Vries (1923; 1924; 1925; 1926; 1927; 1928; 1930 & 1932) and Kloeke (1923; 1924; 1926; 1929) about the origin and history of the Dutch diminutive suffixes. According to Kloeke the origin of the modern Dutch diminutive suffix -tje(n) is to be found in Middle Dutch -kijn. This development occurred in Holland and from there, spread eastwards and northwards to other dialects. Those areas which were least influenced by Holland retained -kijn > -kin > -ke(n). Kloeke does allow for an independent development of -tje in some areas. In his later work (1929→), Kloeke recognises a second area of influence namely Utrecht, where there is evidence of an -i(n) suffix, which, according to Kloeke, then spread eastwards into Overijssel and Drente. Around the 16th century, Utrecht adopted the new suffixes from Holland and as a result /-in/ is now confined to Overijssel and Drente. De Vries sees the origin of -tj in the unusual cluster -tk which could occur when a diminutive suffix was added to certain

nouns. Later on, in the 1920's, he does begin to accept the possibility of -tje < -kijn, although he does not believe in the Hollandic expansion.

During the 1930's, two other important studies of diminutives in Dutch are published. First of all there is Pauwels (1938), but, more important, is the dialect-geographical study by Dr Willem Pée (1936). Pée does for Dutch what Wrede did for German. He describes the exact areas where certain suffixes are used. The map of Dutch diminutives in Appendix A is largely based on this work. One weakness of his research - probably due to communication problems at the time - is the fact that, for Belgium, he uses twice as many informants as for the Netherlands. However this does not seem to have affected his results. During the same period there appear two important studies of diminutives in Afrikaans by Hoge (1932) and Kempen (1940). Both scholars discuss the distribution of the various allomorphs and they analyse which lexical categories can form diminutives. Kempen, whose work is longer, has studied the frequency of diminutives in the literature in some detail, comparing it with Dutch. Both works look specifically at Afrikaans and do not offer much of interest to diminutives in general.

Littman (1943) "Die Diminutivbildung im Tigrē" is the first detailed study of diminutives in a non-European language. This work is discussed in Appendix A. Westermann (1937) "Laut und Sinn in einigen West-afrikanischen Sprachen" also has implications for diminutives. It is discussed in Chapter 4 and led to the studies on sound-symbolism by Fischer-Jørgensen (1967 & 1978) discussed in Chapter 5. A few more dialect studies appear in Germany, where Nörrenberg (1923) analyses Westphalian diminutives,

Rakers (1929) considers the county of Bentheim close to the Dutch border and Schulte (1941) looks into diminutives around Drolshagen and Olpe in the Sauerland, where - quite separate from the surrounding area - the suffixes -t(s)ien and -t(s)ier are used. A number of other minor studies appear during this period. The only detailed study of diminutives in Danish appears in 1943, written by Møller. A few more works on Latin diminutives appear during this period, notably Conrad (1930; 1932) and a Ph.D. thesis by Strodach (1932).

In the Romance languages, the interest in diminutives is far less than in Germanic during this period. There is a short paper by Dauzat (1937) on French diminutives. In Spanish a few articles do appear. Two of these are dialect studies, like Zamora Elizondo (1945) about the Costa Rican diminutives and Perez Guerrero (1942) about diminutives in Ecuador. Walsh (1942 & 1944) published two more general papers. In 1930, Alonso's first paper on diminutives appears. Although this is a short article, we can already see some of the ideas he develops in his later work; notably, the insistence on the importance of what he calls the "emotional" aspect of diminutives at the expense of their "notional" aspect:

> "los diminutivos han sido los únicos elementos lingüísticos a los que los gramáticos han reconocido motu proprio un contenido que no siempre es meramente lógico" (p.35).
>
> ('diminutives have been the only linguistic elements to which grammarians have contributed motu proprio a context which is not always merely logical.')

He uses the term "significativa" and "expresiva" for the two aspects of the diminutive. The former refers to its meaning, the latter to our response to the meaning. On p.36 he states

that the original purpose of diminutives was in fact subjective rather than objective. Their role was to "aislar el objeto, de individualizarlo, de destacarlo en el plano primero de nuestra conciencia, con intensificado aunque vario matiz afectivo." ('isolate the object, to individualise it, to place it in the foreground of our awareness, with a more intense, though varied, affective nuance').

Diminutives are triggered by a mood, "un estado de ánimo" (p.38), not by any linguistic criteria. This can also be used to affect other people, to manipulate them, as it were. An interesting comparative study in this period is Kruisinga's (1942) Diminutieve en Affektieve Suffixen in de Germaanse Talen in which he deals with English, Dutch and German. As far as I have been able to find, his was the first paper to suggest the equivalence between the English analytic diminutive with little and the "usual" synthetic diminutive in European languages, in this case, Dutch (p.448). He, too, stresses the fact that diminutives express "intimacy" ('intimiteit' p.449) rather than smallness. He discusses the various suffixes - -ie/-y in some detail - and stresses the differences between Scots and English. In his Dutch section, he touches upon some of the problems of the distribution of the various allomorphs, which was to feature so prominently in the literature on Dutch diminutives in the 1960's and '70's (Kruisinga 1942:33ff). He also discusses Afrikaans; this section is partly based on Hoge (1932). On pp.40ff, Kruisinga mentions some of the typical areas of meaning where diminutives normally occur in Dutch, and he mentions the interesting point that diminutives are used more in the urban centres than in the countryside (p.41). His German section is largely based on previous studies, especially Grimm (1931).

On the whole, this work emphasizes hypocoristic formation and Kruisinga supplies some interesting observations in this area. He is wrong, though, when he states (p.56), that since Grimm, nobody has mentioned the frequent use of /i/ in diminutive suffixes, thus ignoring Jespersen (1922) among others (see Chapter 5).

2.7 1945 - 1965

It is in this period that the study of diminutives really comes into its own. In individual languages, the main interest shifts from Germanic to Romance, although some important works on Germanic appear - notably, Hofmann (1961) "Die K - Diminutiva in Nordfriesischen und in verwandten Sprachen", Grönke's (1954) thesis on Icelandic diminutives, Cohen (1958) on Dutch and a number of German dialect studies e.g.: Beckmann (1962) on the dialect of Mecklenburg and Brandstetter (1953) on Bavarian.

Beranek (1960) is the first paper on Yiddish diminutives since Sainéan (1903). The most detailed study of diminutives in one language to appear during this period is Rūķe-Draviņa (1959) on Latvian. On Romance diminutives there appear among others Catalan (1958) on diminutive suffixes in Spanish place-names, Sigg (1954) on Tuscan diminutives, Skorge's (1956) very detailed analysis of Portuguese diminutives, and two short papers by Dauzat (1955) and Hérisson (1956) on diminutives in French - Dauzat tackling the synthetic diminutive and Hérisson the adjective petit. Two useful works by Hakamies (1951) and Togeby (1958) consider the history of Latin and Romance diminutives. If there is one study of Romance diminutives that stands out during this period, however, it is Hasselrot (1957) Etudes sur la Formation Diminutive dans les Langues Romanes.

2.7.1 Hasselrot (1957)

The main body of this book explores the origins of the Romance -tt- suffixes. Latin did not have diminutive -tt- suffixes, although they do appear on certain names and may have had a hypocoristic character (9). He discusses and challenges several theories concerning the origin of these suffixes and in the end settles for a Celtic (Gaulish) origin - and he concludes on p.41:

> "Dans les pages précédentes, je crois avoir accumulé des preuves ou, en tout cas, de fortes présomptions en faveur de l'origine celtique des suffixes en -tt-. Au début, ils ont dû être seulement des suffixes onomastiques, hypocoristiques, et c'est comme tels qu'ils ont été empruntés par le latin et par certains dialectes germaniques."

In Gaulish the three different vowel variants already existed: i, a and o. Hasselrot then traces the history of these three variants: -ittu-, the most successful of the three, is represented by both -et and -ot in northern France (44). The distribution of the various modern forms in the NE of France, the most varied area in terms of suffixes, is set out on a map (p.56ff) on which that part of our map in Appendix A is based. In Chapter III he gives many examples of -tt- suffixes being used to denote 'originating from' as in It. vegliotto '(person) from Veglia' (63) or the names of professions as in Normandy Fr. farinet or frinot 'miller's boy' (71).

In Chapter IV he considers the role of -tt- as a frequentative verbal suffix in which it is more productive in modern French than as a diminutive suffix. In Chapter V he looks separately at -ottu and -attu, which have not been successful in French, but have survived elsewhere. Many scholars consider these suffixes mere variants of -ittu, Hasselrot (1957:102ff) disagrees.

-ottu has become quite successful in Occitan. In Italian and Spanish it has become augmentative rather than diminutive. The suffix -attu is much rarer (118), although it survives in most Romance languages e.g.: It. orsatto 'young bear' (119).

In the next two chapters he discusses the role of gender-change in relation to diminutives as well as the role of diminutives in French and French attitudes to diminutives (cf. Chapter 1). Chapter VIII "La formation diminutive dans les autres langues romanes" provides a wealth of information, some of which may be found in Appendix A of this thesis, whereas Chapter IX is perhaps even more interesting as it considers diminutive in a world-wide context. In this chapter Hasselrot starts off by listing the various ways in which languages form diminutives and links this to certain semantic areas linked with diminutives, especially 'femininity' (289ff) and gender in general:

> "Les langues peuvent encore obtenir des diminutifs soit par la neutralisation d'un mot masculin ou féminin, soit en faisant passer un mot du genre animé au genre inanimé, deux procédés tres voisins et qui reviennent à ravaler l'importance ou la valeur d'une notion en la «chosifiant», en la transformant en un simple objet". (298)

In this chapter he also discusses double diminutives, "destinée a souligner avec emphase la diminution et ses connotations éventuelles" (306), pejorative and reverential diminutives (308). He finally discusses use. He mentions as languages which avoid synthetic diminutives on the whole: French, Sard, English, literary German, the Scandinavian languages, Albanian, Ossetic and the Caucasian languages in general, the languages of the Na-Dene family and many other Amerindian languages (316-15). The languages which use synthetic diminutives most are: the southern Romance languages, Dutch and Swiss German, the Celtic languages, Baltic

and Slavic, especially Russian; Greek, Afghan, Tungus, Chinook, Nootka, Wiyot, Uto-Aztec, Tigrē and Zulu (317-18). Hasselrot does not venture into the area of universals, though.

In addition to Hasselrot (1957) there are three other works which deserve a more detailed consideration. All three deal with general principles of diminutives and all three have been of considerable importance and are quoted by all subsequent students of diminutives. They are Seidel-Slotty (1947), Sieberer (1950-51) and Alonso (1951).

2.7.2 Seidel-Slotty (1947)

Seidel-Slotty states the purpose of her paper right from the start:

> "Es gibt eine ganze Anzahl von Einzelabhandlungen über die diminutiva in verschiedenen Sprachen ... Zum Unterschied von derartigen Untersuchungen soll hier das Problem der Diminutiva im Ganzen Betrachtet werden ... Es interessiert nicht die morphologische Seite, sondern die semantische" (23)

She too recognises that "die Verkleinerung hat nicht nur eine logische, sondern auch eine psychologische Seite" (25). Seidel-Slotty makes therefore a distinction between 'real' ("echte") and 'psychological' diminutives, although she does admit overlap between these two. The 'psychological' diminutives can be positive or pejorative (26). Languages differ in the number of diminutives they use. In Russian they are much more common than in English, for example. In many languages the diminutive has an opposite in the augmentative, which is more often pejorative than the diminutive (27). The diminutive competes, as it were, with adjectives and adverbs, because it has a similar function (28). The diminutive modifies the base-word; it affects its size in the widest sense (30):

> "Das Diminutiv steht in irgendeiner Art von Zugehörigkeit zum Grundwort, ist aber nicht das Grundwort selbst, sondern schränkt seinen Umfang ein. Hierin ist an und für sich kein Werturteil enthalten, doch kann durch diese Modifizierung des Grundworts das abgeleitete affektische Nuancen erhalten, die dem Grundwort fehlen" (32).

She links diminutives with the sense of 'belonging' and 'relateness', especially in the sense of <immature>, which she claims is always an important aspect of diminutives (33). The use of diminutives to refer to the fruit of a tree also belongs here, as in Ger. Eichel 'acorn' < Eiche 'oak-tree'. Diminutives and augmentatives are often used to coin new words for new objects e.g. Sp. paño 'piece of cloth', pañuelo 'handkerchief, headscarf', pañolón 'shawl' (36).

There are periods and registers in languages where diminutives become so popular that they lose their strength. This too can lead to the formation of morphological diminutives without diminutive sense. In the nursery, diminutives, which are normally primarily used for animate beings, especially people, may proliferate to such an extent that even lexical categories which do not normally do so, form diminutives (41). Shortened forms often compete with diminutives in the formation of pet-names e.g.: Bul. Ivan-Vanio, Ivantscho, Vanka, Vantsche. In the language of lovers, diminutives are also common, especially those from animal names. Many of these become more general terms of endearment e.g. Rus. **golubčik** 'little dove', Eng. ducky etc. Body parts are popular subjects for diminutives in both children's language and lover's language. Seidel-Slotty also mentions the "understating" or playing down function of diminutives especially when dealing with taboos or with powerful objects and beings in general. So she sets out some of the main aspects of diminutives in her article.

2.7.3 Sieberer (1950-52)

Sieberer in his paper "Das Wesen des Deminutivs" in many ways covers the same ground as Seidel-Slotty. He too is primarily interested in meaning and use. He emphasises, more than Seidel-Slotty, the emotional aspects of diminutives:

> "Das Wesentliche Merkmal eines Deminutivs ist also seine Gefühlsbetontheit. Oft ist Kleinheit mit-Vorgestellt, häufig bleibt sie ganz aus dem Spiel" (86)

In many cases the diminutive does not just affect a particular word, but it casts a diminutive veil over the utterance. It expresses a mood and in such a case we can use the term "satzdeminuierung" ('sentence diminutive');[5] diminutives can be used to render a person favourably disposed towards one (88) and Sieberer quotes from Alonso (1930) to support this point. In their worst form these can be described as hypocritical diminutives ("heuchlerische Deminutiva"). Diminutives add a richness of expression to one's speech (90). Nevertheless there are national differences (90ff) and sex-differences in that men use them less than women.

Certain subject areas produce more diminutives than others, especially animals, plants, body parts, items of clothing, and people. In the last category Sieberer includes hypocoristics. The typical situation for diminutives is direct address and most early examples of diminutives occur in the vocative case (93). This may therefore be the origin of many diminutives. Many diminutive suffixes are similar to adjectivalising suffixes, so these too could be related (96). The sense of 'belonging to' would support this theory e.g.: Sp. garganta 'throat, neck', gargantilla 'necklace', i.e. 'object belonging to the throat, neck'.

Diminutives are popular because they soften the language, they make it less direct: "deminutives reden erfreut und wirbt; die grelle Direktheit der Sprache wird gemildert, das Gesagte wird weniger apodiktisch, die Urteile werden weniger scharf umrissen und weniger verpflichtend" (100). The specific emotion behind diminutives is found when one is confronted by that which is small, weak and young (100). Anything can be put into this category if required.

Diminutives are optional and their use may therefore vary from one language to another, from one dialect to another, and even from one idiolect to another. When diminutives become too popular, they may lose their force and thus many words exist that are diminutive in form though not in meaning (103). A special section is reserved for the development in France, which is outlined in more detail in Chapter 1 of this thesis. Sieberer recognises the following general functions of diminutives:

a. praising or belittling.

b. expressing friendship or friendliness.

c. describing friendly, familiar objects.

d. referring to the sun and animals.

e. expressing respect.

Certain sounds seem to be commonly found in diminutives. Sieberer mentions /i/ and geminate consonants and he refers to Jespersen and to Martinet in this context. He suggests a deep psychological background to this preference for certain sounds (118).[6]

2.7.4 Alonso (1951)

Alonso's paper "Noción, emoción, acción y fantasía en los diminutivos" again covers many of the points of Seidel-Slotty (1947) and Sieberer (1950-52). This paper can also be seen as an expansion of Alonso

(1930), which was known to Sieberer and probably to Seidel-Slotty. Alonso emphasises the importance of the subjective side of diminutives even more. Its function is to personify an object (196), to focus on it. Although he recognises that 'smallness' is part of its meaning, this is by far the least frequent function (197). A diminutive is primarily a sign of affection. The fact that it may mean the opposite too is a problem (201). He goes into the "professional" diminutive used by beggars in some detail. These are used to create compassion in the listener so that he or she is prepared to give something to the beggar. He also gives examples of a similar type of diminutive-use in progress where the speaker asks a favour from God or from a saint:

> San Cristobalito
>
> manitas, patitas
>
> carita de rosa
>
> dame un novio pa mi niña que la tengo mosa
>
> ('Saint Christopher + Dim
>
> hands + Dim, feet + Dim
>
> face + Dim like a rose
>
> give me a husband for my girl who is single' (p.209)

Alonso distinguishes between diminutives whose content is directed at the listener and those directed at a third person (210). The problem is how to work out whether a diminutive expresses an emotion or whether it communicates an emotion, or both (211). He distinguishes between "active" and "effusive" diminutives although once again they may be difficult to separate. There are also "courtesy" diminutives used to add an element of politeness to the utterance. Diminutives are most common in regional dialects and rural areas. They are commonly used in poetry, especially by certain poets.

Alonso mentions Borges and García Lorca as examples. Here the poet's imagination triggers the necessary emotion to use diminutives (220). Finally Alonso ties everything together in a diagram (227) of the various kinds of diminutive according to the intended direction of the psychological content:

referring to the subject of the Dim.	notional (objective)
	emotional
	sentence Dim (expressing a mood)
	esthetic-valorative (poetry)
referring to the listener	affective-active
	courtesy
	effusive
both	representational-eloquent
	(refer to a wished-for imaginary situation)

Even so he has to admit that he has not really tackled the problems of diminutives satisfactorily: "nunca hubiera sospechado la existencia de tantos problemas ..." (228) (- 'I never suspected the existence of so many problems'). And even he has difficulty in distinguishing between his various categories. I have attempted a simpler sub-categorisation in Chapter 3.

2.8 1965 - 1985

In this period we see a return to a more equal interest in Germanic and Romance languages. In Dutch this period features various attempts to come to grips with the distribution of allomorphs, especially -tje and -etje. A series of papers was started by Cohen (1958) but during this period, the interest becomes stronger with contributions

from Brandt Corstius (1967) who tries to make a computer model, Haverkamp-Lubbers and Kooy (1971), whose model is based on Chomsky & Halle (1968) and, responding to H-L & K (1971), two papers by Gussenhoven (1978) and Ewen (1978), the latter following a dependency analysis. These works will all be discussed in Chapter 6 when we are dealing with the problems of diminutives in the Grammar. There was also a major dialect study at this time, namely Leys (1968), who studied diminutives and augmentatives in West Flemish. In Germany a few dialect studies appear, all are on Bavarian. Steiniger's (1982) paper deals with hypocoristics specifically, while Moser (1969) and Kargl (1975; 1976) deal with diminutives in a more general sense.

In Spanish we see, similar to Dutch, attempts to find the rules governing the distribution of suffixes. Lázaro-Mora (1976) takes a semantic approach, while Rojas (1974) and Jaeggli (1980) attempt a more morpho-phonemic approach. The latter two papers also attack the rules laid down by the Real Academia in Madrid. Bishop (1974) provides a more general treatment albeit that her short paper is based on Peruvian Spanish. Hasselrot too publishes another monograph; this one, Hasselrot (1972) is much shorter than the earlier work and concentrates on French diminutives in the 20th century. It is based on examples collected over the years by the author. The studies by two Romance scholars during this period are especially notable. First of all there is Gooch (1967) who attempts to provide a complete guide to Spanish diminutives. A short introductory chapter covers most of the general points of meaning, distribution of suffixes etc. and the rest of this work is taken up with examples from the literature of each of the diminutive, augmentative and pejorative suffixes, in each of its different uses.

2.8.1 Ettinger

The other one is Stefan Ettinger, who supplies various publications on Romance diminutives. Apart from an article about the linking particles of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese (1972), he provides two books. Ettinger (1980) Form und Funktion in der Wortbildung is a second revised edition of a work of the same name first published in 1973. This is a detailed bibliography of works on diminutives in Latin, German and Romance languages and some other works relevant to these. Because of its detailed treatment, it is very much a state of the art report and it is intended as a companion volume to Ettinger (1974) Diminutiv- und Augmentativbildung; Regeln und Restriktionen in which he puts forward his own ideas and findings. This work too contains a "Forschungsbericht" as its first chapter, which covers the same ground, though in less detail as Ettinger (1980); presumably for those readers who have not seen the other work. In this work a wealth of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Rumanian data is presented in a useful way. The Rumanian data were collected from a dictionary and the rest from various literary sources. Ettinger's main interest seems to be in the distribution of the most common suffixes. He seeks to base his rules on the final vowel or consonant of the modified stem and on the number of syllables of that stem. He fails, however, to come up with the clear-cut "Regeln und Restriktionen" promised in the title. The value of this work, apart from the wealth of data, lies elsewhere. There are many interesting facts not easily available elsewhere; his sections on suffix-accumulation, for example, including that on accumulated suffixes in Old Spanish (272ff) is most valuable. The general model Ettinger uses is that formulated by Coseriu. In relation to diminutives and augmentatives, this divides up the problem as follows (from Ettinger 1974:20):

System — change of lexeme

Diminutive: Lexeme -X

Augmentative: Lexeme +X

Norm — a. distribution of various suffixes or allomorphs

b. distribution between fixed, obligatory or optional variants

c. which lexemes allow no modification

d. frequency of modification in a particular idiolect or period etc.

Rede — the modification in its context

At the end of the book he deals with various aspects of meaning and a comparison of the languages studied. The sample is, of course, too limited to come up with any trends or universals, but that is not the purpose of his analysis.

2.8.2 Non-European Languages

During the period since 1965 there has been an increasing interest in diminutives in Amerindian languages, especially in relation to the phenomenon of consonantal symbolism. I refer in particular to Nichols (1971) and Haas (1970), while Ultan (1978) also includes a lot of Amerindian data (see 5.7). Haas has also published a very interesting short paper on diminutives in general. Haas (1972) is interesting because it is the first general work on diminutives that does not take a "eurocentric" viewpoint. She manages in only four pages to include some of the more important points about diminutives. She mentions briefly the various methods used to form diminutives around the world (148-9) and then gives details with examples from various languages (149-151). On p.151 she mentions some of the domains of use for diminutives including 'baby talk' and kinship

terms. As one would expect most of her examples are from English and the American languages she has studied; in her introduction (148) she manages to give the following universals: (see also Chapter 8)

> "It is safe to say, I think, that the notion of the diminutive is a language universal, or, at any rate, a near-universal".
>
> "The presence of an augmentative implies the presence of a diminutive but not vice-versa."

Footnotes

1. Note that Grimm uses 'diminution', rather than the 'deminution' of most later German writers on diminutives.

2. For a more detailed analysis of this theory cf. Jespersen 1933.

3. Grimm also includes here the diminutive plural suffix -lich/ -lach (682). cf. chapters in this work on German and Yiddish diminutives.

4. And in Afrikaans, which, I suppose was not recognised as a separate language in the days of Grimm. The name Afrikaans was first used in the mid 19th century.

5. I refer to footnote 15 in Chapter 3.

6. cf. Chapter 5 of this thesis.

3. MEANING AND USE

3.1 Introduction

With the term diminutive, we think immediately of smallness, of limited size, limited duration, small amount, etc. Although this is an important part of the meaning of most diminutives, there is another area of meaning which is at least as important. This is the area which one could loosely describe as that of emotion. This emotion can be either positive or negative - positive as in terms of endearment, negative when used to express contempt. In addition to these two central areas of smallness (objective) and emotion (subjective), our data supply a number of other semantic areas that are somehow linked with diminutiveness, either because one suffix expresses both diminutiveness - defined by the two areas of 'smallness' and 'emotion' - and one or more of these peripheral areas, or because a diminutive carries connotations from one or more of these areas in a given language or languages. The universal areas of meaning found to be linked with diminutives are outlined in figure 3.1.

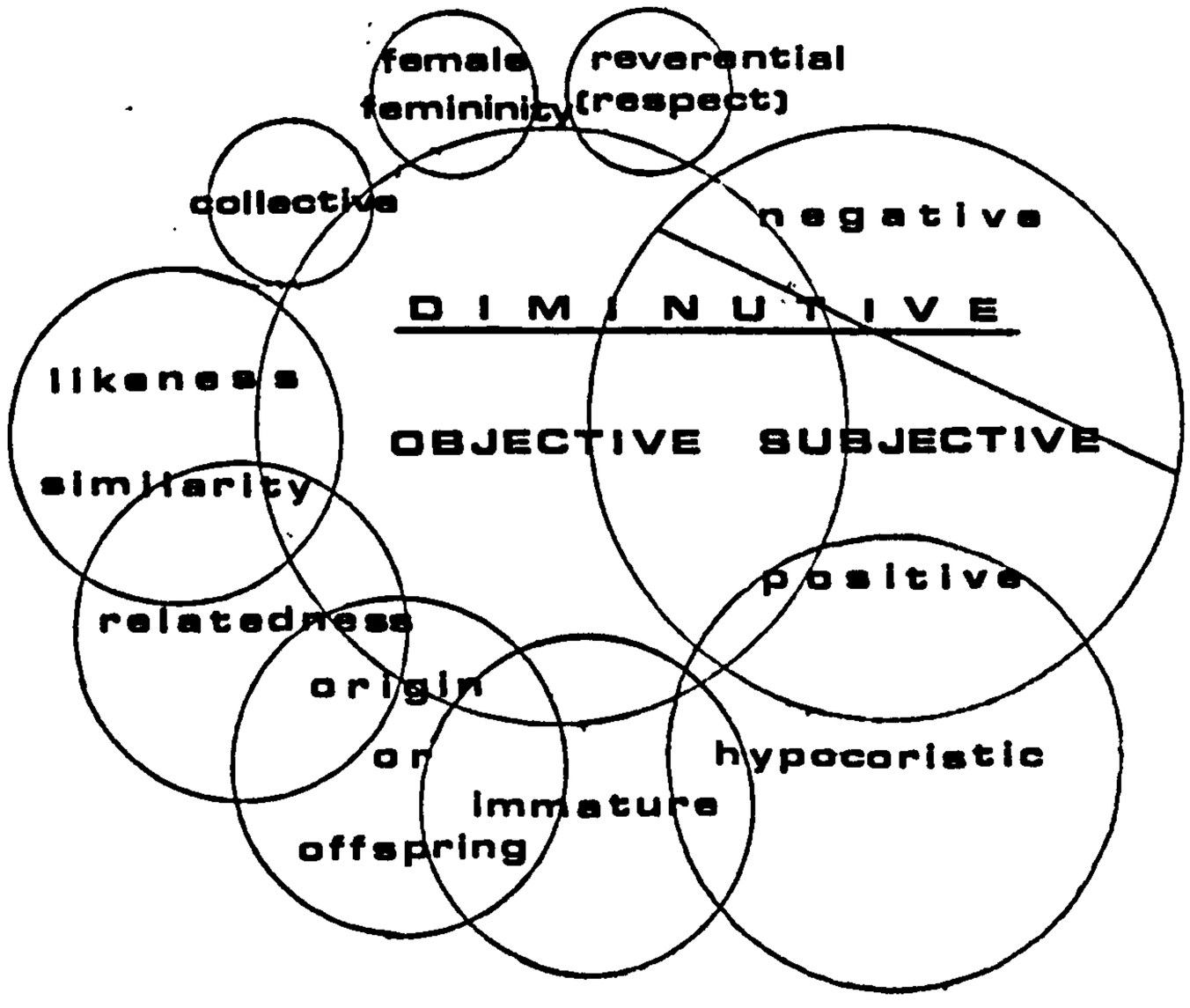


Figure 3.1

"Reverential" overlaps with the "objective" area because its use has become conventionalised in many languages. Where this is not the case it may be made to overlap with the "positive subjective" area as well. The first part of this chapter will deal with a discussion of each of the areas in fig.3.1.

3.2 Smallness vs Emotion

As I have stated above, and as is indicated by fig.3.1, the central meaning areas of diminutives are that of referring to limited size **frequently associated with the expression of certain kinds of emotion** This emotional aspect of diminutives has been recognized for a long time. Grimm (1931:III:664) for example states:

> "Das diminutivum hat nicht nur den ausdruck des kleinen, geringen, sondern auch des lieblichen, Kosenden."

It was Alonso (1930 & 1951 also: 2.7.4) who first studied this aspect of the diminutive in some detail. Especially in the second of these papers he puts forward the point of view that the "emotional" use is by far the most important one; for

> "Cuando el sentido central es realmente el de disminución, se suele insister en la idea de pequeñez con otros recursos. Es raro, ... encomendar exclusivamente al diminutivo la idea de tamaño reducido." (Alonso 1951:198)
>
> ("When the central meaning is really that of diminution, one tends to express the idea of smallness by different means. It is rare ... to assign to the diminutive only the idea of reduced size.")

This is true for most of the languages I have studied. Alonso proposes the terms "notional" diminutive (nocional) and "emotional" diminutive. Most of his examples are from (Argentine) Spanish. For our use the term "emotional" might be somewhat confusing.[1]

I would therefore propose the following terms: objective diminutive and subjective diminutive. It could be argued that the status of the purely semantic concept of "smallness" is different from that of "emotion", which is related more to the pragmatic area of use. However the fact is that the meaning of 'small' actually disappears and is replaced by various subjective elements. Anyhow the terms objective vs subjective diminutive seem to be more appropriate.

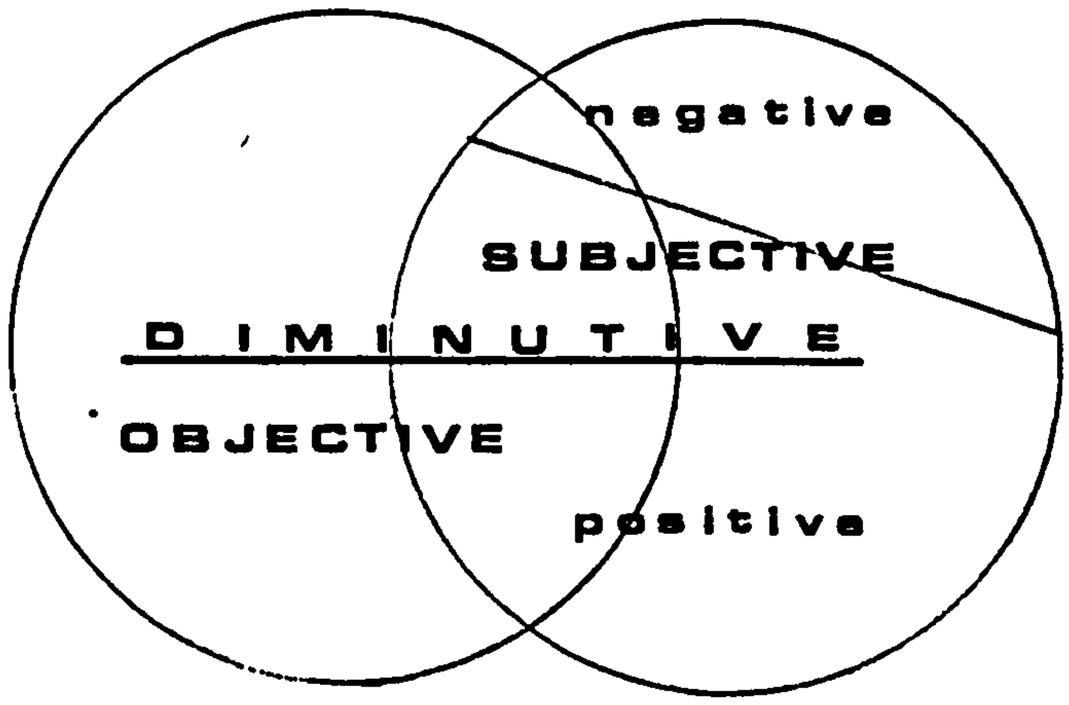


Figure 3.2

We have, then (fig.3.2), an area of purely objective diminution referring to limited size only and an area of purely subjective diminution, which can be either pejorative (negative) or endearing (positive). There is also an area of overlap between the two where various degrees of subjectivity may be found in the diminutive.
In most languages where both types of diminutive are used - and this is especially true for most of Europe - the objective diminutive is normally grammaticalised by means of an analytic diminutive (involving an adjective). Conversely the subjective diminutive is normally grammaticalised by means of a synthetic diminutive (in Europe, usually a suffix):

	objective dim.	subjective dim.
analytic dim.	✓	
synthetic dim.		✓

Figure 3.3

The two most notable exceptions to this tendency in European languages are Standard English (but not the regional dialects and Scots) and Standard French. In Standard English the picture is as follows:

	objective dim.	subjective dim.
analytic dim.	<u>small</u>	<u>little</u>
synthetic dim.	<u>-let</u> <u>-ette</u>	<u>-let</u> <u>-ette</u> <u>-ie/-y</u>

Figure 3.4

In most cases an analytic diminutive is used, which is made possible in Standard English because of the use of two different adjectives.

3.2.1 <u>Experimental evidence</u>

This specialisation of the two adjectives in English has been mentioned in the past by Sieberer (1950/1), Kruisinga (1942:448ff) and by the <u>Oxford English Dictionary</u> among others (cf. also English section in Appendix A and Chapter 2), but as far as I am aware, it has never been tested. To remedy this situation it was decided to carry out a small experiment. A total of 20 short sentences and phrases were collected in which either <u>small</u> or <u>little</u> were left out to

be inserted. In addition informants were given the option of using wee and in fact two phrases were included in which wee was expected even from non-Scottish informants: A --- laddie and A lovely --- lass. Note, however that in Northern English dialects wee is not necessary in these environments. The 20 phrases are of 3 types. Those where the use of a certain adjective would lead us to expect a subjective diminutive (cf. 3.12); those where an objective diminutive would be expected and one where either is possible. Preliminary research indicated that factors other than objectivity might influence the choice of small or little. Especially word-order seemed to play an important role as illustrated by the following:

A depressing little place

? A depressing small place

A small depressing place

? A little depressing place

This was also tested therefore.

34 informants returned questionnaires. Of these 12 were from Edinburgh and the Lothians, 12 were from other parts of Scotland, 9 were from England and one from Northern Ireland. This last informant was added to the English group although some differences were noted.

The non-Scottish group followed the expected pattern most closely, as is shown in Fig. 3.5 below. The numbers indicate the number of informants (out of 10 in this case) opting for the form in question. Any second choices appear in brackets. There was one Lancashire informant who used wee in (1) and (7). The Northern Ireland informant used wee in (9). The single Tyneside informant in our sample seemed to use small rather more than expected. As these are single informants, not too much can be made of this.

Fig.3.5 Non-Scottish Informants (Sample size = 10)

	small	little	wee
(1) A sweet _____ girl.		9	1
(2) This is a mean _____ spending cut.	2	8	
(3) The era of the _____ car has only just begun.	10		
(4) A _____ dark room.	10		
(5) A _____ depressing place.	9	1	
(6) The _____ red box.	5	5	
(7) What a nice _____ boy.		9	1
(8) We have only a _____ house.	8	2	
(9) This charming _____ Mini is for sale	1	8	1
(10) A _____ laddie.	1	2	7
(11) Get your dirty _____ hands off!	1	9	
(12) A _____ gloomy house.	9	1	
(13) A beautiful _____ village.		10	
(14) A lovely _____ lass.	1	4	5
(15) A pleasant _____ drive.		10	
(16) He is _____ for his age.	10		
(17) A _____ bribe might settle it.	9	1	
(18) Add a _____ amount of sugar.	10		
(19) I prefer _____ eggs.	9	1	
(20) A depressing _____ place.	1	9	

Over all, the expected pattern emerges, including the influence of word-order on the selection of the adjective, particularly in (4), (5) and (12). It can be seen how subjective adjectives like sweet, mean, nice, charming, dirty, lovely, etc. prompt the selection of little, whereas their absence or any hint of objectivity prompts the selection of small (cf. 3.12). The --- red box seems to be ambiguous; half of the informants use small and half use little. The absence of a subjective adjective may have influenced the former, while the use of the definite article may have individualised the object just enough for the latter to choose little.

In Central-belt Scots an almost French situation exists (cf. 3.2.2) in that wee can be used both for objective and subjective analytic diminutives. The diminutive suffix is rare in this area, from which nearly all our Scottish informants originate.

As expected, both small and little have made serious inroads and a mixed system seems to have developed, both in the Lothians and in the rest of the Central belt. Let us consider the latter first of all. All 12 informants in this group show a mixed type involving the use of wee, small and little. Out of the 12 informants, 2 showed a marked preference for wee; one from Dumfries and Galloway - and therefore not "Central Belt" - and one from Lanarkshire. The actual use of the 3 forms varied from one individual to another, although on the whole the results are remarkably similar to the non-Scottish pattern.

Fig. 3.6 "Central Belt" Scottish Informants (Sample = 12)

	small	little	wee
(1) A sweet _____ girl.		8	4
(2) This is a mean _____ spending cut.	5	4	3
(3) The era of the _____ car has only just begun.	10	2	
(4) A _____ dark room.	6	2	4
(5) A _____ depressing place	7	1	4
(6) The _____ red box.	1	5	6
(7) What a nice _____ boy.		3	9
(8) We have only a _____ house.	10(1)	1	1
(9) This charming _____ Mini is for sale.		10	2
(10) A _____ laddie.		1	11
(11) Get your dirty _____ hands off!		9	3
(12) A _____ gloomy house.	11		1
(13) A beautiful _____ village.		10	2
(14) A lovely _____ lass.		2	10
(15) A pleasant _____ drive.		8	4
(16) He is _____ for his age.	7		5
(17) A _____ bribe might settle it	9	1	2
(18) Add a _____ amount of sugar.	8	3	1
(19) I prefer _____ eggs.	8	3	1
(20) A depressing place.		5	7

There are some interesting features. First of all the use of small for (2). In the non-Scottish group 2 informants from the North of England opted for this too. (6) also caused disagreement, but here many opt for the "neutral" form wee. Wee also emerges as an objective form in (16) and as a subjective form in (7) and in (20) for example.

It is possible - but this is conjecture - that wee is normally restricted to the less formal domains. It is therefore quite acceptable in (16), but less so in (3), even though on the grounds of objective vs subjective it would be acceptable in both cases.

The Edinburgh and Lothians results show still more confusion. Contrary to expectations, wee seems to be more prominent than in the previous group, especially in (3), (12) and (17) although this could be due to differences in the socio-economic groups to which our informants belong. On the whole the same pattern emerges as far as little and small are concerned and once again wee appears as an alternative to both.

Fig.3.7 Edinburgh & Lothians Informants (Sample = 12)

	small	little	wee
(1) A sweet _____ girl.		6	6
(2) This is a mean _____ spending cut.	2	6	4
(3) The era of the _____ car has only just begun.	9		3
(4) A _____ dark room.	7(1)		5
(5) A _____ depressing place.	7	1	4
(6) The _____ red box.	.	5	7
(7) What a nice _____ boy.		2	10
(8) We have only a _____ house.	9		3
(9) This charming _____ Mini is for sale.		9	3
(10) A _____ laddie.		1(1)	11
(11) Get your dirty _____ hands off!		7	5
(12) A _____ gloomy house.	5	2	5
(13) A beautiful _____ village.		7	5
(14) A lovely _____ lass.			12
(15) A pleasant _____ drive.		4	8
(16) He is _____ for his age.	7		5
(17) A _____ bribe might settle it.	5(1)	1	6
(18) Add a _____ amount of sugar.	8	3(1)	1
(19) I prefer _____ eggs.	9	1	2
(20) A depressing _____ place.		5	7

Both of the Scottish groups seem to be slightly less sensitive to the word-order phenomenon in (4), (5) and (12), although the vast majority still do opt for small or the neutral wee.

The suffix -ie/-y in Standard English is limited to hypocoristics and terms of endearment and fits in with the general European pattern of using one particular suffix in this way.
The two other suffixes -let and -ette are much less subjective than diminutive suffixes in most other European languages. In fact they are often used for purely objective diminutives and they occur therefore in both columns in figure 3.4.

3.2.2

In French the situation is different again:

	objective dim.	subjective dim.
analytic dim.	petit	petit
synthetic dim.	-et(te) -ot	-et(te) -ot

Figure 3.8

The differences with English are firstly the lack of a specialised hypocoristic suffix: French has developed a specialised -ot/-ette opposition for hypocoristic use. The main difference however is the fact that petit is used for both objective and subjective diminutives, as wee is in Central Scotland.

There are languages which have separate suffixes for objective and subjective diminutives - so both are expressed by means of a synthetic diminutive, but the actual suffix used is different in each case. Often the difference in meaning between the suffixes is merely one of degree of subjectivity. According to Arquint (1964:101) this is the case in Western Ladin, where -in has stronger affectionate connotations than -et (see Appendix A). Similarly in Portuguese -it- is more objective than -inh-. A more specialised objective/ synthetic diminutive is formed by -áitis/-áitė in Lithuanian e.g.

langáitis 'small window'

This is used next to a large number of subjective synthetic diminutive suffixes in Lithuanian. In Russian a two stage diminutive system is used. With a standard diminutive, some subjective diminutive sense is present, whereas the intensified diminutive is more subjective:

drug 'friend' družók 'friend + Dim'

družočyok 'friend + Int Dim'

(see also Appendix A)

The following examples will serve to illustrate the points made above; more examples can of course be found in Appendix A.

Objective Diminutive

Fr.: îlot 'small island'

Eng.: he is only small for his age

tinlets of Humbrol paint

Du.: een klein huis is gemakkelijker schoon te houden

'a small house is easier to keep clean'

Subjective Diminutive

Eng.: a beautiful little village

It was a little punlet

(Germaine Greer on Midweek BBC Radio 4, 25:1:84)

Du.: een lekker muziekje 'a nice bit of music + dim'

Fr.: mon petit chéri

Por.: quer um cafèzinho? 'would you like a (nice little) cup of coffee?'

Sc.Gae.: cailleachag 'little old woman'

3.3 Subjective Diminutives

Subjective diminutives deserve more detailed treatment as these are the most common type of diminutive - and inside this large class, a lot of different subtypes can be recognized. I include under this heading any diminutive that does not primarily refer to limited size. At one extreme there are subjective diminutives which still have a strong objective element; an example of this type is the

synthetic diminutive triggered by or found in combination with an analytic diminutive e.g.:

Du.: een klein huisje 'a small house + Dim'

In this sort of environment in Dutch and in many other languages, a synthetic diminutive is almost obligatory. Both an objective and a subjective diminutive are conveyed in this example. At the other extreme, there are cases where an objective diminutive is logically impossible and a subjective diminutive is intended:

Ger.: warte mal ein Stündchen 'just wait an hour + Dim'

Por.: cèguinho 'blind + Dim'

Lat.Am.Sp.: ahorita 'now + Dim'

Que.: hatuncha 'big, large + Dim'

Most diminutives probably fall somewhere between these extremes in that they are subjective in type, although an objective explanation would be logically possible and connotations of smallness may therefore be present. Whether a subjective diminutive is positive or negative is usually determined by the context. This context often takes the form of an adjective which carries a positive or negative value e.g.:

a { beautiful / depressing } little village (cf. 3.2.1)

In some languages, different suffixes are used for a positively subjective diminutive and for a negatively subjective diminutive e.g.: Sp.

aldea 'village	aldeacita	'little village' (positive)
	aldehuela	'wretched or miserable little village'

(Gooch 1967:137)

Bas.:

haur 'child'	haurtto, haurtcho	'little child' (endearing)
	haurchkila bat	'a naughty child'

Even many of the languages that do not possess these specialised pejorative diminutive suffixes still convey stronger negative connotations with some suffixes than with others. The suffix -et- is only very mildly pejorative in Spanish and Portuguese e.g.:

Por.: alegre 'Happy, cheerful' alegrete 'a little drunk'

In Rumanian the diminutives convey no pejorative sense at all. They are only endearing, the augmentative being used with pejorative connotations.

3.4 Hypocoristics

This term, which comes from Ancient Greek, refers to anything that is 'of the nature of a pet-name'. In many languages these hypocoristics are formed by means of a diminutive suffix and after the "pure" diminutive this is the most important area to be linked with diminutives. In many languages hypocoristics can be formed without recourse to diminutive suffixes e.g.:

Elizabeth > Liz

Edward > Ed, Ted

Ger.: Heinrich > Heinz

Friedrich > Fritz

But the use of diminutive suffixes for the formation of hypocoristics is very widespread e.g.:

Yid.: Jankef > Jankl > Jankele

Bas.: Xabier > Xabiertxo

Du.: Marianne > Marianneke

Tig.: Maḥamūd > Maḥamūdāi

Sannēt > Sannētat

Que.: Imillu > Imillucha

Sc.Gae.: Mór > Morag (lexicalised)

EX BIBL. UNIV. EDINBURGEN.

It.: (Calabria) Chiara > Chiarodda

Dan.: Lars > Las, Lasse etc.

Hypocoristics are closely linked with endearing (subjective) diminutives. In fact in many languages, one suffix is used to form both hypocoristics and diminutives from kinship terms and often also from words referring to domestic pets and familiar objects. This is the case with the Standard English suffix -ie/-y, which as well as forming hypocoristics such as Annie, Jacky etc., forms diminutives from kinship terms e.g. daddy, auntie etc. as well as domestic animals and familiar objects, especially in the domain of children's language (spoken both to and by children) e.g.: doggy, potty, nighty etc. For these reasons, the "hypocoristic" circle in fig. 3.1 shows some overlap with the "subjective diminutive" circle. There is also some overlap with "immature", because hypocoristics are usually used to address and refer to children, albeit that some people may be stuck with them for the rest of their lives. Their link with this latter area is far less important, however, than their link with subjective diminutives.

3.5 "Immature"

Under the heading "immature", I class anything referring to young people or animals. In some languages there are specialised suffixes for referring to these two groups. Ngiyambaa, an Australian language, for example, has a suffix -ga: for this purpose e.g.:

girbadja	'kangaroo'	girbadjaga:	'joey'
winar	'woman'	winarga:	'girl'

In Thompson, -ē'Et is <immature> : ṣno'ya 'beaver', ṣnǒyahē'Et 'young beaver'; and in the related dialect of Shuswap -Elt is <immature> e.g.: ṣnǒyahē'hē'Elt 'young beaver' with partial

reduplication). In many other languages, the "immature" suffixes also serve various diminutive functions. These suffixes vary from, on the one hand, diminutive suffixes which are used primarily to refer to young animals (or people), to normal diminutive suffixes which have 'immature' as one of their many meanings. Lithuanian -ūtis/-ūtė is of the former type e.g.

katūtis 'kitten'; varliūtis 'froglet'

And so is -andru in Rumanian, to some extent. Malkiel (1970:45 mentions the suffix -ascu/-escu etc. in the Cabraniego dialect of Asturias with this specialised meaning extended to plants:

berd-i-asca 'green twig'

Many of the rarer suffixes in French have a strong 'immature' element:

baleine	'whale'	baleinon	'whale calf'
lion		lionceau	'lion cub'

Examples of diminutives of the latter type - i.e. those that are primarily diminutive but include 'immature' as one of their functions - can be found in most languages. In English -let is an example e.g.:

piglet, toadlet, froglet etc.

In English, no ambiguity arises; when -let is used with an animal name, it always refers to 'immature'. In most languages, however, it is not always clear whether we are referring to a young animal or whether we are using a subjective diminutive. In Dutch, katje can mean either, and an adjective like jong 'young' would have to be used to resolve the ambiguity. This is the case in most of the languages studied. The "immature" circle in fig. 3.1 shows some overlap with "origin or offspring" to allow for piglet 'the offspring of a pig' as well as 'a young pig'. In the case of, for example, nymphette we are dealing with 'a young nymphomaniac' - hence within the "immature" area - but not necessarily with

'the offspring of a nymphomaniac', so the two do not always coincide.

3.6 Origin or Offspring

'Offspring' is usually, though not always, included in the meaning of ⟨immature⟩ suffixes and those diminutive suffixes which cover or partly cover 'immature'. 'Origin' is a more general area. In many languages there seems to be some link between the concept of 'B originates from A' and diminutives. This is the case where diminutives are closely linked to patronymics as was the situation with -(l)ing in Old Saxon, OHG[2] etc. e.g.:

Charal 'Charles' Charalinc 'son of Charles'

silabarlinc 'coin originating from, made from silver'

(Grimm 1831:682ff)

This sense survives in some of the languages in our own data. Icelandic -lingur is an example which, like English -let, refers as much to offspring as to 'small animal' e.g.:

gris 'pig' grislingur

köttur 'cat' ketlingur

Similar links may be found in the Czech patronymic suffix -ček which is also diminutive. The sense of 'belonging to' and 'originating from' is in Dutch expressed by a suffix -er e.g.: Edammer 'from Edam', which in certain southern dialects can be used to form hypocoristics e.g.:

Leopold - Polder (see also Du. Section in Appendix A).

The southern Italian suffixes with -ll- are often found in surnames as well as being diminutive. The Lithuanian suffix -aitis which is an objective diminutive also has the sense of "offspring of" as in

põnas 'gentleman' ponaitis 'son of a gentleman'

A similar example is Xhosa:

ínkôsi 'chief' ínkósána 'chief's son'

In Rumanian, diminutive suffixes are often used to produce names for geographical phenomena. In this way, the tributary of a river often forms its name by adding a diminutive suffix to the name of the main river to which it is connected, thus the Lotrişorul and the Lotriţa are tributaries of the Lotru (Puşcariu 1937:306).

The sense of 'originating from' and 'belonging to' are often part of the meaning of the Bantu diminutive class-prefixes too e.g.:

Swa.: kiswahili 'Swahili language, manner, dress etc'

kiunguja 'Zanzibar manner, dress, customs etc'

i.e. 'everything that belongs to the Swahili people or the people of Zanzibar' and 'all that originates from' these places. The Tibetan -bu suffix which, because of its exceptionally broad meaning will be discussed separately, also carries this meaning e.g.:

nal 'incest' nal-lu, nal-bu 'a child originating from incest' or 'illegitimate child'.

3.7 Relatedness

Here again, there is considerable overlap with the previous area. There are some examples in our data, however, where 'relatedness' seems to be the overriding element. Many examples of this use of diminutive suffixes have become lexicalised and do therefore not directly concern us. One example, which is still to some extent felt to be derived from its base-form, is Icelandic:

ostur 'cheese' ystigur 'cheese - curds'

→somehow related to cheese but not quite cheese.

In Aztec a-cinλi 'water for domestic use or in a tank or well' is related to but not quite the same as a-λ 'water' in its most

general sense. A similar example is Swahili uvuli 'shade', kivuli 'shadow'. Russian kontorka 'desk' from kontora 'office' also belongs to this class. Under this category we could include examples of a distributive type like Yiddish śnai 'snow' - śnaiele 'snowflake' or Italian carbone 'coal' - carbonella 'charcoal in small sticks'. Relatedness could perhaps also be used to explain examples where a diminutive suffix is added to a word referring to one striking aspect of a person to then refer to that person as a whole . In the case of English fat > fatty, it is also a nominalising suffix. The same is true for the following example from the Cabraniego dialect of Spanish:

dulce 'sweet' dulcerina 'small very sweet cherry'

Other examples are Basque adar 'a horn', aďar 'the devil', and Occitan ponsèto 'fat person' ('stomach' + Dim). Diminutives may also be used in a few cases to refer to the function of an object e.g.:

Otyihereró ǯuva 'hear, understand' } okaǯuvatui 'good, sharp hearing'
okutui 'ear' }

3.8 'Likeness', Similarity

This is a very large area and our data show examples in many languages where a diminutive suffix can also be used to express similarity. In English itself, the -ette suffix expresses similarity in leatherette, caravanette, etc., even little can be used in this sense in English as in he is a little Hitler. In many languages such examples have become lexicalised as in Scottish Gaelic leàbag or leóbag 'flounder' from lèab 'a corner of cloth'. But often some connection with the base form is still present in the consciousness of the native speaker e.g.:

Oc.: teule '(roofing) tile' teulon 'flat pebble'

or Ice.: bagall 'rod' baglingur 'bacterium'

Names for plants and some animals may be formed in many languages by adding a diminutive to the name of some object it is felt to be similar to. In Rumanian, this area is very productive. Puşcariu (1899:13-20 ; 1902:98-105 & 1937:306) gives examples of these. They are all lexicalised of course, as is Russian

volk 'wolf' volcyots 'thistle'

Other examples from Russian, where similarity must have been the main cause of the formation are:

nox 'nose' nosok 'nozzle of vessel or jug'

pyetux 'cock' pyetusok 'weather-cock'

and probably

voda 'water' vodka 'wodka'

the latter perhaps with some irony.

Similar examples occur in many other European languages and many can be found in our data. This type of diminutive use is not limited to Europe. Our data contain quite a few examples from other languages. Many examples have not been included in the data as, on the whole, we have limited ourselves to productive diminutives and most of these examples are in fact lexicalised; however, the following have been included among others

Quechua (Ayacucho): /wayta/ 'flower /waytaku/ 'penis'

Nez Perce: sik'em 'horse' ciq'a.mqəl 'dog'

In Kwakiutl, diminutive suffixes are used to derive a form meaning 'to play at X' from 'X'. This must also be considered a type of 'similarity' as 'playing at X' means 'doing something like X, but not X itself' e.g.:

se'xwa, sēx^{u} 'to paddle' sā'sewuma 'to play paddling'

In Nez Perce, a diminutive form of an object often refers to a toy-version of that object - again 'play' means 'similarity', although smallness is obviously involved too e.g.:

?ini.t 'house' ?ili.t 'doll's house'

ke.tis 'spear' katicka.tic 'toy spear'

3.9 Other Areas of Meaning

The four areas just outlined are all somehow interrelated. All four centre around the area of origin and relatedness and quite a lot of overlap exists between them. These areas are also those most commonly mentioned as being somehow related to diminutives by scholars who have studied diminutives.[3] I have found three more areas of meaning that seem to be somehow linked with diminutives in many languages. These areas are not interrelated in any obvious way, as the four previous areas were; nor are they themselves related to the four previous areas in any discernable manner. Examples of these types of diminutive use are also much rarer in our data. Again I will discuss each of them separately.

3.9.1 Collective

I have only been able to find a few examples of the same suffix being used both for diminutive and collective - and even in those languages where they exist, they appear to be marginal. In French the -ette suffix is collective in the word olivette 'olive grove'.[4] This suffix can hardly be called productive in this sense as the usual suffix is -aie e.g.: chênaie 'oak plantation', olivaie 'olive grove'. In Provençal too the -eto suffix is used in this way: ouliveto 'olive grove'. The usual suffix is -edo:

blacaredo, rouveiredo 'oak plantation'

ouliveiredo 'olive grove'

A more convincing collective-diminutive suffix is found in Lithuanian in the form of the suffix -ãitis/ãitė, which, as we have seen, has a number of different uses e.g.:

alksnãitė 'alder forest' beržynãitė ' birch forest'

Perhaps one of our examples from Tsonga could be interpreted as a collective: mavivi 'a sweeping', swivivana 'some sweepings'; but our data are too limited to say anything more about this.

3.9.2 Female, Femininity

The connection of gender with diminutives has been discussed at length in the literature,[5] without anyone coming up with an explanation. It does seem to be a general fact that diminutiveness is generally more closely linked with neuter and feminine genders than with masculine.[6] By extension perhaps diminutives are also linked with the concept of 'femaleness' or 'femininity' - and many languages possess diminutive suffixes which are also used as 'female' or <feminine> markers. In English the -ette suffix serves once again as an example in words like usherette (from usher) and newscasterette (from newscaster see Appendix A and 6.2.2). In French too the -ette suffix serves as a female marker, although here it is limited, on the whole, to personal names e.g.:

Claude - Claudette

Yves - Yvette etc.

In West Frisian, the diminutive suffix -(s)ke can be used as a female marker with names of professions e.g.: kastlein 'publican', kastleinske 'publican's wife' or with personal names e.g.: Sytze

- Sytske. This use extends to certain (mainly northern and western) Dutch speaking parts of the Netherlands and there is some evidence of it having existed in Low German (cf. Flechsig 1954:53). In Icelandic -ing seems to function in this way in karl 'man, fellow' kerling 'woman, old woman'. In Occitan too there are some examples of female names derived from male names by means of a diminutive suffix e.g.: Jan - Janeta. This type of derivation is quite productive in Rumanian where the female of an animal is often marked by what is normally a diminutive suffix (cf. Seidel-Slotty 1947:27-28). This use is extended to humans, where formations of the type doctor 'doctor(m)' doctoriţă (doctor(f)' are fairly productive. In Russian, masculine hypocoristics and kinship terms are frequently formed by means of a feminine suffix -ka. The same suffix is used in this way in Hungarian. From our data, it would appear that the use of the diminutive suffix as a 'female' marker is limited to European languages. Even the Tibetan -bu suffix does not have this meaning.

In a much wider sense, however, the feminine gender can be used to form a diminutive in many languages. In a way similar to Bantu, where a noun changes its class to form a diminutive, in these languages words form diminutives by becoming feminine in gender. There are no examples in our data, but for the sake of completeness this phenomenon should be mentioned. It has been reported from some northern Indo-Aryan languages and from Santali, a Munda language - which probably borrowed the procedure from one of the neighbouring Indic languages - among others.

e.g. Afghan: ḍanḍ (m) 'large pool' ḍanḍah (f) 'fairly small pool'
(Hasselrot 1957:289).

A similar phenomenon exists in the Hamito-Semitic languages - but not in Tigrē - as well as in some Amerindian languages. Hasselrot (1957:289-299), who takes a particular interest in this area discusses diminutive-feminine syncretism in some detail.

Carnicer (1975/6) in a short article claims that in Spanish a peculiar relationship exists between certain pairs of words where the masculine rather than the feminine form refers to the smaller object. There is no connection here with the diminutive suffixes although some of his examples do incorporate such a suffix.[7] An example of such pairs is huerto 'garden', huerta 'large garden'. This is fairly widespread in the Romance languages and Hasselrot (Chapter VI) gives many examples. Von Wartburg (as quoted by Hasselrot p.156) explains these feminine forms as having a collective sense which derives from their having been neuter plurals in Latin. The oldest and most popular pairs are indeed of this type. Other instances could then be formed by analogy. Various scholars quoted by Hasselrot suggest deeper psychological explanations for these forms. According to Spitzer for example, as summarized by Hasselrot (157), it is all "dû au sentiment de l'homme que la femme constitue pour lui quelque chose de vague, d'indéterminé, d'immense et qu'il se perd dans son sein, qu'il se sent absorbé par elle". Although Hasselrot rejects this particular explanation he does not reject the "explication animiste" altogether. There are indeed examples where sexual symbolism must have played a role as in Por. colchête(m) 'the hook of a hook-and-eye fastener' and colchêta(f) 'the eye of a hook-and-eye fastener'. To quote Hasselrot (164): "Tant que le genre grammatical existe, il est susceptible d'interprétations et de réinterprétations et, tout relâche qu'il peut paraître, le lien entre genre et sexe, sexe et genre reste toujours une réalité".

Hasselrot, however, has also found many instances where the masculine form refers to the larger object. In fact he regards this as the original and older type "... auxquels l'existence de couples à féminin augmentatif devait sembler une anomalie contre laquelle on a réagi avec plus ou moins d'énergie" (167).

In the end it seems to be largely a question of personal opinion as neither side comes up with enough evidence to support its case.

In Lithuanian there seems to be some specialisation whereby suffixes which have a masculine and a feminine form almost always occur in only one of these forms. A similar specialisation has taken place in French where the hypocoristic suffixes now show a masculine-feminine opposition by means of the different suffixes -ot/-ette. It could be that this kind of development ultimately leads to one suffix becoming identified with a certain gender. The next step could be for this diminutive suffix to become a gender marker or a 'female' marker.

3.9.3 Reverential

A reverential use of diminutives is quite common as we shall see below when we consider the uses of diminutives. However in a few languages there is a more direct link between certain "diminutive" suffixes and the expression of respect. This could well be the case for the Lithuanian suffixes -ùlis/ùlė and ùžis/-ùžė, which, because of their gender-specialisation (cf. 3.9.2), could be considered as -ùlis/ùžė (see Lithuanian Section in Appendix A). The former is used mainly with kinship terms and may express both endearment and respect as in ponùlis 'dear Sir'. The latter suffix is very rare now and has become limited to a few areas related to 'daughterhood', 'love' and 'happiness'. In addition both of these suffixes are

used to refer to the sun and the moon and this would suggest a reverential use in pre-Christian times[8] e.g.:

nėnūlis 'the moon + Dim'

saulūžė 'the dear sun'

In Russian too, hypocoristic and kinship diminutives often have connotations of respect and this is also true for the Indian -ji suffix e.g.: mamaji. In Tibetan, one example survives of the -bu suffix being used as a reverential, a function which is, on the whole, expressed by different means; but nan-bu 'my humble little self' suggests that this was once part of the meaning of the -bu suffix. In Quechua the -lla suffix is normally used to limit whatever it has been attached to. It is also added to -cha to reinforce the diminutive sense of that suffix and it may be used for "... adding a measure of courtesy or politeness to the expression". (Solá, Tupac Yupanqui et al 1972:2.10). Aztec and many Central American languages have a specialised reverential suffix which does however have "a sort of diminutive sense ..." (Whorf 1946:378). It takes the form -cin(-λi).

e.g.: no-kal 'my house' but mo-kalcin 'your house'.

3.10 Grammatical Function

In Section 3.7 we saw a few examples in which the diminutive suffix acted as a nominalizing suffix. Examples of this are quite common, deriving a noun either from an adjective, a numeral or a verb e.g.:

adjective > noun

Eng.: short > shorty[9]

Du.: klein 'small' > kleintje[10]

Ice.: smalur 'small, narrow' > smálki 'small object'

Oc.: paure 'poor' > paurȯt 'poor little one'

numeral > noun

W.Fri.: in trijke 'a nest with 3 eggs'

Du.: een tientje 'a 10 guilder note'

verb > noun

Fr.: fumer une fumette de hasch

Lit.: šviĩpti 'to whistle' švilpūkas 'a whistle'

Tig.: ramqa 'to request' rēmqāi 'beggar'

Tib.: ñug-pa 'protrude, stretch out' ñu-gu 'worm'

These examples are largely limited to the languages in which adjectives, numerals, verbs etc. cannot form diminutives in their own right (cf. 3.11ff below).

3.11 Diminutives from other Lexical Categories

In most European languages in our data, if an adjective, numeral, adverb or pronoun is used in a diminutive form, this diminutive is a subjective one. For these subjective diminutives, the same holds as was discussed in 3.3 - except that any objective element is much rarer in these forms than in nominal subjective diminutives. In some languages, an objective diminutive from these categories is possible and these will be discussed below.

3.11.1 Adjectives

After nouns, the next most common category to form diminutives is adjectives. If in a given language only some adjectives form diminutives, one of them is always the form meaning 'small' (cf. Chapter 8). In Germanic and Celtic languages an adjective usually becomes a noun when a diminutive suffix is added (cf. 3.10).[11] This noun then refers either to an object or person possessing

the quality referred to by the adjective or it may have a more abstract meaning as in Scottish Gaelic: mȍr 'big, large', mȍran 'much, a lot', or àrd 'high', àrdan 'pride'. In the Romance and Slavic languages, many adjectives can form true diminutives.[12] These are usually subjective diminutives. If they are objective, they have the sense of intensifying, as in Czech: malý 'small', maličký, 'very small, tiny' or of attenuating as in Spanish and Portuguese alegre 'happy, merry', alegrete 'a bit merry' (often due to drink). With colour terms, the diminutive suffix is usually equivalent to English -ish. It expresses similarity - brownish is 'like brown' and Friulan rossit is 'like red, similar to red'. At the same time, it serves to attenuate the original quality; brownish is less brown than brown and rossit is less red than rossu. Accumulation of suffixes to form an intensified diminutive serves to increase the intensification e.g.: Cabraniego: pequerriñín or peqirrichín 'teeny-weeny' (see Spanish Section Appendix A). It may also increase - as it were - the attenuation e.g.: Italian calduccino 'quite hottish'. In these cases, however, the subjective elements usually become dominant. In some languages special suffixes are used to form diminutives from adjectives. In Breton this is -ik, one of the allomorphs of the normal diminutive suffix. In Czech and Russian, more specialised affixes are used. In Czech, they either take the suffix avý e.g.: bílý 'white', bělavý 'whitish', or they take the prefixes na or při as well as the suffix -lý e.g.: hloupý 'foolish', přihlouplý 'a bit foolish'. These two serve both to attenuate and to intensify. In Hungarian, only the two most common diminutive suffixes can be used for diminutivising adjectives. Again they have either an attenuating or an intensifying effect;

attenuating in nagyocska 'fairly large' and intensifying in kicsike 'very little'. In Egyptian Arabic, adjectives are the second most common category after hypocoristics to form diminutives, but this sort of situation is rare, as we shall see in Chapter 8. The attenuating/intensifying use of diminutive adjectives is very widespread especially to express the equivalent of English -ish with colour terms. Even such languages as Maya use it: sak 'white', sa-sak 'half-white, whitish'. The intensifying effect is illustrated by Yokuts godi?da, 'small', goči?ča 'tiny, little' (little suggests some subjective diminutive sense).

3.11.2 Adverbs

Adverbs are the next most common lexical category to form diminutives. In Dutch a diminutive suffix of a special kind - it has an additional -s - is used to adverbialise certain adjectives e.g. stil 'silent' stilletjes 'silently' (with subjective diminutive connotations). In German, the ability to form diminutive adverbs is largely restricted to the language spoken to and by children and the regional dialects. In Afrikaans, on the other hand, it is fairly productive, almost always to form subjective diminutives. This is also the case in Yiddish e.g.: pamélinkes 'slowly' (endearing). In English one cannot form diminutives from adverbs; so the Germanic languages vary considerably in this respect. In Gaelic I have found only two examples from the dialect of Tiree of diminutive adverbs, namely seothachan 'here + Dim' and sudachan 'there + Dim' (see also Celtic Section in Appendix A). These are both subjective diminutives. In Italian, diminutives are quite productive with adverbs and like adjectives they have an intensifying sense (Hasselrot 1957:232-233). In Occitan the diminutive adverb

doçamenton 'softly' is now lexicalised, but this type of formation may have been more productive in the past as were diminutive adjectives. Diminutive adverbs are relatively common in Spanish and especially in Latin America, where in the Andean countries for example, forms like prontito 'soon + Dim', tempranito 'early + Dim' have become more common even than their non-diminutive forms. In these cases, some intensification is coupled with a generally subjective diminutive sense. Similar forms exist in Portuguese and here too the American dialect (Brazil) goes further than its European counterpart. In Rumanian only a few adverbs form diminutives e.g.: puţin 'a little, somewhat', puţinel. This is a subjective diminutive in the sense that it is largely restricted to the children's domain and other settings where endearment is to be expressed. In the Slavic languages again only a few adverbs form diminutives e.g.: Russian 'softly, silently'. In non-European languages diminutive adverbs may also be found e.g.: Tibetan da 'now, at present, just', da'ur 'suddenly, instantly'. This seems to have an intensifying effect. A very similar set of forms was found in Quechua: kunan 'nowadays, at this moment', kunachallan 'at this very moment' where an intensifying effect is accompanied by some subjective diminutive sense. This is achieved by the double suffix -challa, which consists of a limiting suffix + a diminutive suffix.

In our very limited data from Guaraní, there is one example of a diminutive adverb: megwé 'slowly', megwè-mí 'slowly slowly'. There seems to be some intensifying effect here. Thus there appears to be some evidence that, around the world, a diminutive adverb usually expresses some intensification as well as serving as a subjective diminutive. With multiple suffixes such as

Argentinian Spanish cerquitititita 'near, close + 4xDim', the subjective diminutive is obviously the dominant element.

3.11.3 Numerals

There are only very few examples of diminutive numerals in our data and this probably does reflect, to some extent, their rarity. The ones we do have, seem to be of three general types. First of all there are the purely lexicalised examples where num.>N e.g.: Dutch tientje 'a 10 guilder note' or Frisian in twake 'a nest with two eggs'. The second type involves diminutive forms with a lexicalised meaning, but also has a strong subjective element and these seem to be of a recognisable international type, where a numeral becomes a specific type of adverb e.g.:

Du.	met zijn tweetjes	'together, just the 2 of us/you/them'
Hun.	kettecskén	as above
Tib.	gčig-pu	'alone, single, only'

Finally the third type is primarily a subjective diminutive. These are proper diminutive numerals e.g.:

Afr.	my drietjies skapies	'my three + Dim sheep + Dim'
Arg.Sp.	cinquito	'five + Dim'

The Afrikaans example is a so-called "satzdeminutiv". It is in these "sentence diminutives" that subjective diminutives can spread to lexical categories that do not normally form them. The type is largely restricted to the language used to children and by lovers as well as the pleading or begging diminutive used in some languages. (cf. footnote 15).

3.11.4 Personal Pronouns, Demonstratives, Interrogatives

In many languages, personal pronouns can be diminutivised in the language used to address children e.g.: German du 'thou'

duchen. In some languages these forms are used more widely. They are endearing and therefore subjective diminutives with no objective element present e.g.:

Afr.	ek	'I'	ekkie
	ons	'us/we'	onsie
Ch.Sp.	algunitos	'some people + Dim'	
	ningunitos	'nobody + Dim'	
Por.	nossinho	'our + Dim'	
	ambinhos	'both of us/them/you + Dim'	
Br.Por.	elazinha	'she + Dim'	
	umazinha	'one + Dim'	

Diminutive demonstratives and interrogatives are used in a similar subjective fashion, but these may have a certain attenuating or intensifying sense e.g.:

Ar.	hāḍōntā	'this, that + Dim'
Ec.Sp.	ahicito	'just over there'
	esita	'that very one'
Arg.Sp.	estito	'this very one'
Bas.	hauxe	'this + Dim'
Tig.	ʾellītāi	'this (m) + Dim'
	lʊ̄hatīt	'that (f) + Dim'

An interrogative was found in Basque: nun? 'where?', nuntche? 'where exactly?'.

3.11.5 Interjections & Greetings

Interjections are usually an expression of emotion, so a subjective diminutive is to be expected here. Our data show very few examples however e.g.:

Afr.	ag toggie!	'oh dear + Dim'
Ch.Sp.	por diosito!	'by God + Dim'
Por.	santinha paciência!	'holy + Dim patience'
Rum.	aolică!	expression of shocked surprise

Greetings form subjective diminutives especially in Portuguese and American Spanish. There are some examples in other languages. In many languages they may occur in the domain of child language. The following examples are not from this domain, though:

Du.	de groetjes	'greetings + Dim'
Ec.Sp.	hasta lueguito	'see you soon + Dim'
Por.	adeuzinho	'good bye + Dim'
	até loguinho	'see you soon + Dim'

3.11.6 Verbs

Verbal diminutives are extremely widespread compared to the last few categories and this is reflected in our data as they contain many instances. From the examples in our data, these "diminutive" verbs are of various types. First of all there are many cases of participles being used adverbially and probably as the result of this they are able to form diminutives. These are usually of the subjective type, being used in the language spoken to and by children and other informal domains. The meaning is unaffected e.g.:

Low Ger.	hennefalleken	'fallen down + Dim'
Sp.	dormidito	'asleep + Dim'
	corriendito	'running + Dim'
Por.	bem trabalhadinho	'well worked + Dim'
	lavadinho	'washed + Dim'

In the Italian example infettucciati 'infected, stained, polluted + Dim' some objective diminutive sense seems to be present, of an attenuating kind as we would expect with an adverb. The one example from Otyihererǒ might be considered a nominalising diminutive as the diminutive class-prefix is, of course, a noun-class prefix: nyengua 'hate (v)' okanye 'small hate'. In Brazilian Portuguese it is possible to form diminutives from auxiliaries e.g.: não querzinho comer nada 'he/she does not want + Dim to eat anything'. Hasselrot (1957:227) claims that these forms employ a diminutive and frequentative suffix -inhar. As far as I can see they are purely subjective diminutives.

The other examples in our data can all be formed from the infinitive of the verb. These are of three types.

(1) Iterative: they express repetition of an action or repeated interruption. The French iterative verbs involving the suffixes -t(t)-, -ch-, or -ll- are of this type: parloter, flanocher, toussailler etc. So are the Portuguese and Spanish iterative verbs in -ic- or -uc- e.g.: Portuguese tossicar 'keep coughing all the time'. In Hungarian an iterative aspect is combined with the diminutive sense of 'involving small movements' although usually the iterative dominates e.g. ájuldozik 'to keep fainting'. Outside Europe iterative verbal diminutives are found in Tibetan, where the sense of 'protraction' or 'continuation' can also be involved and in Quechua, where the -kacha- suffix expresses an iterative aspect as well as, in some cases, rapid changes of direction e.g.: qhawakachay 'to look in all directions'; rit'ikachay 'to snow with interruptions'.

(2) Objective Diminutive Verbs: these refer to a smaller amount than usual or an action which is somehow less important or which involves 'smallness' in its widest sense e.g.:

Ger.	lächeln	'to smile' (< lachen 'to laugh')
Fri.	roeikje	'to row about a bit using slow, short strokes'
Friul.	tazzutâ	'to cut into small pieces, mince'
	zujuzzâ	'make a little fun of'

(Most of these forms in Friulan are iterative however.)

Lit.	linktelė́ti	'to nod once' or 'to nod a little'
Tig.	ḥarārasa	'to plough a little here and there'
Cab.	llobicar	'to drizzle' (this uses iterative -ic-)
Sw.Ger.	rägele	'to drizzle'

We could probably add the Kwakiutl examples in -a to this which involve the sense of 'playing at ...', that is, a smaller or less important version of the action (cf. 3.9).

(3) Subjective Diminutive: most of the examples of verbal diminutives are of this type. In many languages these forms are restricted to the language used to address children and lover's language, e.g.:

Fri.	aikje	'to stroke + Dim'
Du.	etentjes doen	'to eat + Dim'
Afr.	slapenstyd nadertjies	'bedtime approaches + Dim'
Yid.	ślőfinken	'to sleep + Dim'
Dan.	sovse	'to sleep + Dim'

The Arabic verbal diminutives using the -ay- infix are also usually of this type. In Lappish the verbal diminutive, which is quite prominent, has a number of different meanings. It can express short duration, speed or suddenness. It can also be used for polite requests or, when added to a verb without shortening the stem, it has negative connotations of mockery or boastfulness. Finally it can have a certain intensifying sense e.g.:

addes munnje cazi 'be so good as to give me some water'

dat lave addistit dav'dun lakkai 'he usually gives for motives of profit'

3.11.7 Two Stage Systems

Some languages in our data employ a two-stage diminutive system involving a normal diminutive and what we have called an "intensified diminutive".[13] This intensified diminutive can be rendered either by a multiple suffix, as in the Romance languages, or by a specific diminutive intensifier slotted in between the base and the standard diminutive suffix, as is customary in Slavic languages. In Germanic, two-stage diminutives are rare. They exist in Afrikaans - which uses a double suffix e.g.: pappietjie 'father + Dim + Dim' - and in Yiddish, which uses what could be considered a variant of its diminutive suffix e.g.: haazl 'house + Dim', haazele 'house + Dim + Dim'. A similar type is also used in some Austro-Bavarian dialects. As our term implies they usually form an intensification of the diminutive either of an objective diminutive, where they refer to smaller size or, more often, of a subjective diminutive, when they express greater endearment. In Russian, for example, the objective

sense that may still be present in knižka 'book + Dim' completely disappears in favour of subjective elements in the intensified diminutive form knižyočka 'book + Dim. int'. Once a language goes beyond the two-stage system, it usually does this by accumulation of suffixes. These normally serve to express even greater endearment, as in Tig. walētētētētatīt 'girl + Dim + Dim + Dim + Dim'. Alternatively, it can express any type of intensified subjective diminutive, as the degree of endearment expressed by the Tigrē example is not really present in, for example, Arg.Sp. cerquitititita 'near + Dim + Dim + Dim + Dim'.

3.11.8 Conclusions

In the light of what has been discussed so far, we could add a few more meaning areas to fig.3.1. The subjective diminutive may be involved with all lexical categories and this emerges as the most typical diminutive type. A few more areas have emerged which should now be linked with the objective diminutive. First of all, for adjectives and adverbs, there are the two apparent opposites of intensification and attenuation. For verbs, we have to introduce the additional area of iterative aspect. Other areas, like 'continuation' or 'protraction' or 'suddenness', could be added - although they affect only a few languages. The fact that one suffix may be used for more than one of these areas of meaning has already been mentioned; in English for example the -ette suffix covers more areas than any other diminutive suffix (fig. 3.9; shaded area signifies scope of -ette)

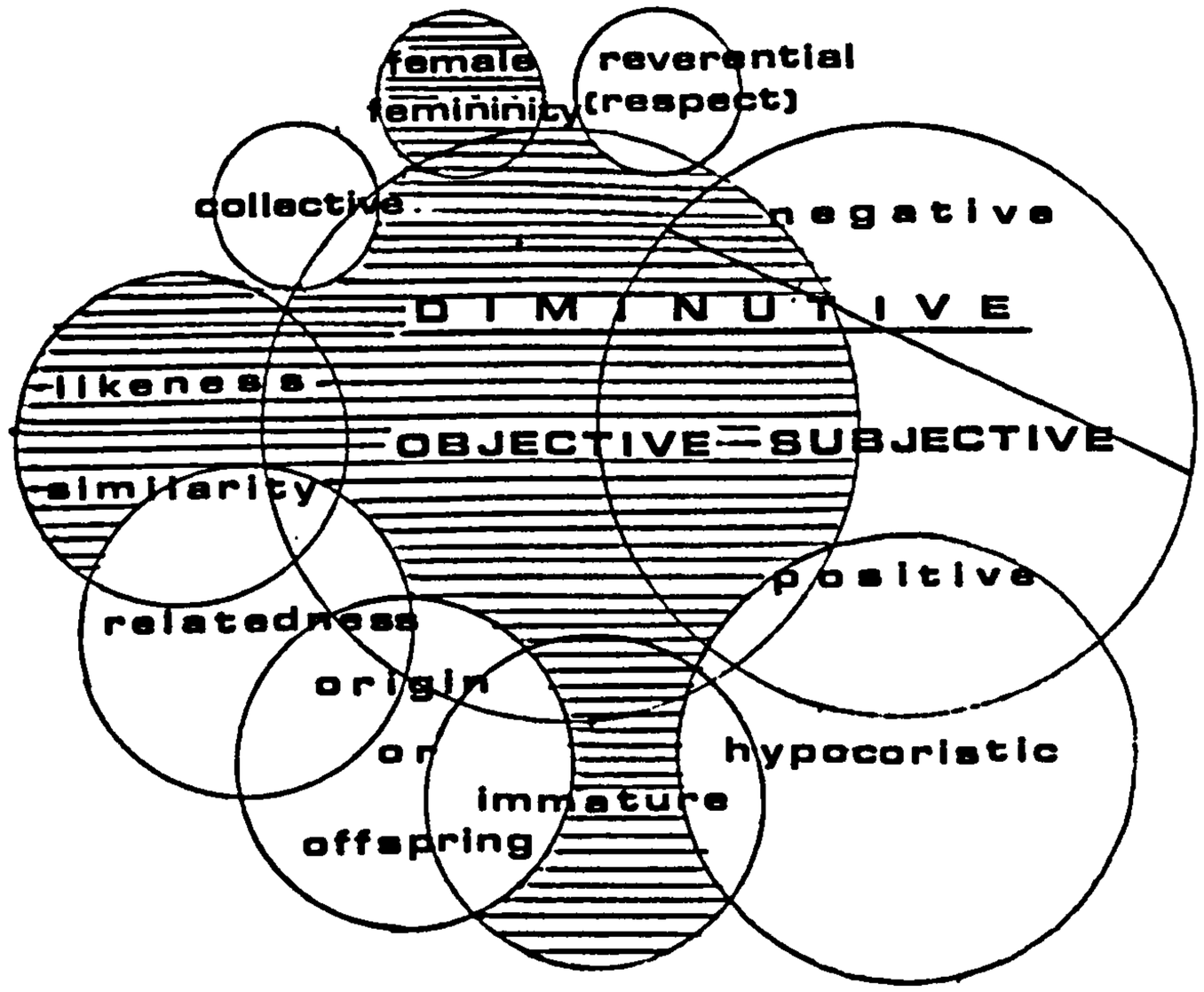


Figure 3.9

As well as covering the objective diminutive, it covers the overlap between objective and subjective. Apart from -ie, no English diminutive suffix can be used for subjective diminutives only. -ette also covers 'immature', 'likeness, similarity' and 'female, femininity' and thus is very versatile. Rūķe-Draviņa (1959:401-2) gives the following areas of meaning shared by the seven main diminutive suffixes in Latvian:

(1) belonging, similarity, diminutive

(2) origin, patronymic, diminutive

(3) nominalizing of adjectives, determination, diminutive

(4) augmentative, comparative, diminutive

(5) intensification, comparative, diminutive

(6) feminine, female personal names, diminutive

(7) collective, diminutive

Thus, within one language, most of the areas we have found around the world can be encountered. The most versatile suffix in this respect is probably the Tibetan -bu suffix. First of all, as a noun, bu means 'son, boy, child, offspring' (cf. Chapter 7).

As a suffix, it covers the following general areas:

(1) Diminutive: - subjective

- objective: - small objects

- attenuation or intensification (adjectives)

- decrease in intensity of a process (verbs)

(2) 'origin', 'offspring' including a patronymic function and a general sense of anything originating from something or deriving from something, and also the outcome of such a process.

(3) The above may be extended to cover any object somehow related to a process or anything involving similarity.

In practice, these categories can be subdivided ad infinitum to cover various examples which are not obviously related to any of the above. Some examples are given in the Tibetan section of Appendix A, but the full extent of the suffix would require a far more extensive discussion than is possible in this thesis. A few illustrative examples will have to suffice:

rgyal-po	'king'	rgyal-bu	'son of the king'
dpuṅ-pa (originating from the shoulder)	'shoulder'	dpuṅ-pa'ibu	'arm'
ral-gri	'sword, dagger, spear'	ral-gri'ibu	'a small knife'
gsos-pa	'to foster, cherish'	gsos-bu	'foster-son'
rǰe	'lord, master, chief'	rǰe'u	'lesser lord, gentleman'
smyug-ma	'bamboo'	smyu-gu	'shoot, sprig, branch'
dmig-pa ('originating from the hole')	'hole, opening'	dmig-bu	'small lizard'
šoq-šoq	'paper'	šoqbu	'book' (some dialects only)
khaṅ-pa	'house'	khaṅ-bu	'room'

Similarity is expressed in:

rce(-mo)	'point, top, peak, summit'	rce'u	'thorn'
rji-ma	'eye-lashes'	rji'u	'fin of a fish'

with pejorative connotations in:

dar	'silk'	dar-bu	'course silk'
gčam-pa	'made'	gčam-bu	'artificial, insincere, etc.'

A special function is to denote ritual objects:

phur-pa	'peg, stable, large nail'	phur-bu	'ritual dagger'

The function of intensification is largely limited to adjectives meaning 'small', 'short' etc. In many of these cases, it may take the function of a comparative e.g.:

thuṅ-ba	'short'	thuṅ-ṅu	'shorter'

In other cases there may be a nominalizing function as in:

bsil-ba	'cool'	bsil-bu	'coolness'
gžon-pa	'young'	gžon-nu	'a youth'
gser	'gold'	gser-bu	'kind of golden colour'

In addition there is some evidence of a reverential use of -bu although this is no longer productive. Figure 3.10 illustrates the meaning of this suffix whose scope extends over all the shaded areas. I have found no hypocoristics with -bu although they may exist; 'feminity' does not come into it at all, but I have found a few examples that could be considered collectives e.g.:

gan-bu	'cluster of buds, a pod or sheath, fresh shoot of leaves'
phyur-bu	'hay rack, shock of sheaves, heap of sticks'

Albeit that this function may be the result of one of the other categories. For a detailed analysis of this suffix I refer to Uray (1952).

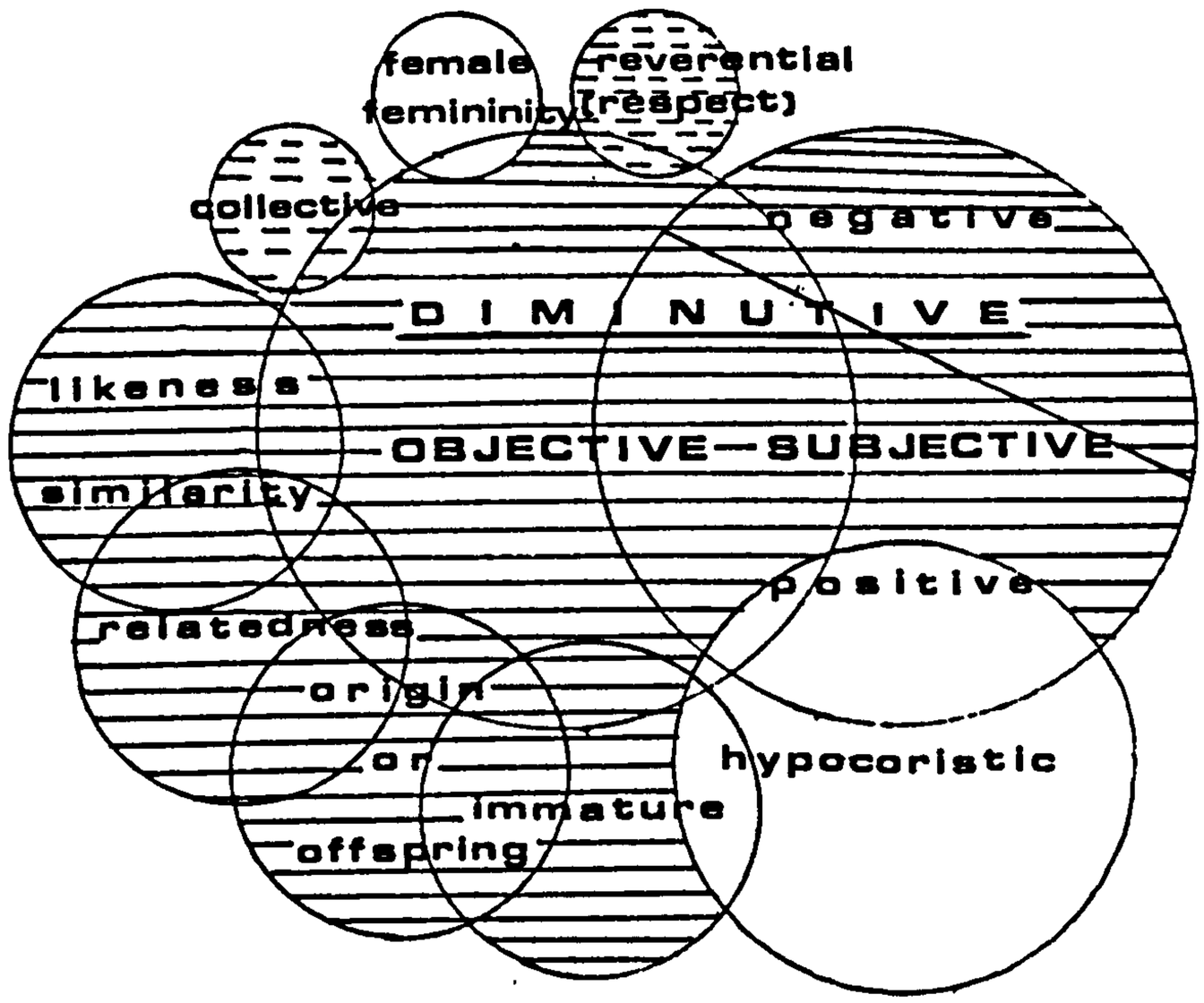


Figure 3.10

3.12 Use

Under this heading, I want to consider some sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects of diminutives: where are they used, by whom, when and for what purposes? There is of course the use purely as an objective diminutive, which I will not go into any further. A few general points should perhaps be made at this stage. First of all there is the fact that the more formal the domain or language situation, the less common the subjective diminutive. Objective diminutives can occur at any time in any place where they are relevant. Another point mentioned time and time again in the literature, is that women and children are much more likely to use diminutives than men. Hasselrot (1957:318) attributes the frequent use of diminutives by women to their greater exposure to children. In some languages, for example Sard, men would not normally use diminutives at all. Robin Lakoff (1977:236-7) maintains that women are much more likely to keep their own diminutive hypocoristic than men, for ".... as soon as they realize the connotations of these diminutives, boys customarily make strong

efforts to shuck them off". This is definitely true for English, although perhaps less so for some other languages, for example Russian. Whether a subjective diminutive is used in a positive (endearing, appreciative) or a negative (pejorative, belittling) sense depends on context and on paralinguistic factors such as intonation, facial expression etc. The determining context is very often a qualifying adjective.[14] Thus we can have in Dutch:

een aardig boekje	'a nice little book'
een onbeduidend boekje	'an insignificant little book'

The first example has positive connotations: it is interesting, perhaps entertaining or funny; it may be a short book, although if used in a humorous way, it can refer to a very large tome. The second example is negative: it is boring, a waste of time and paper and, again, we do not know about its size (for a similar feature in English see 3.2.1).

Having established the positive and the negative types of subjective diminutive, we can now go on to make yet another distinction. A subjective diminutive can be employed to express some inner feeling, positive or negative, like or dislike; or it can be used to create an effect in another person. In many cases, these two are combined and it may be difficult to ascertain which type we are dealing with as Alonso (1951:211) also found:

> "La cuestión es discernir en cada ejemplo, y hasta donde nuestra facultad analítica nos lo permita, cuándo la motivación original del diminutivo es una intención activa que se conforma en afectuosidad, y cuándo, por el contrario, se trata de un resumo directo de la emoción sín que el hablante se preocupe, o importándole secundariamente, del efecto causado en el oyente."

In other words, when lovers address each other as my little darling or words to that effect, are they merely expressing their own feelings or are they trying to create an effect in their lover or both? On the one hand, there are a number of situations where self-expression is probably of primary importance:

(1) Expressions of pleasure or enjoyment.

(2) Expressions of shock, anger or surprise.

On the other hand, there are a number of areas where some sort of attempt is made to affect the hearer:

(3) Insults.

(4) Expressions of pity.

(5) Manipulative uses of diminutives for:

(a) Politeness, reverential.

(b) Euphemism, playing down.

(c) Pleading, placating.

(d) Salesman's diminutive.

(e) Humour.

In the area in between both or either may be intended:

(6) Addressing and referring to children.

(7) Lover's language.

(8) Expressions of friendship, camaraderie, intimacy of some kind.

(9) Referring to favourite things, places etc.

Alonso (1951:210; 227) makes a distinction between those diminutives which are addressed to the object of the endearment and those addressed to a third party and referring to the object of the endearment. I doubt whether this is really a necessary distinction to make, as in both cases, the same emotion is being expressed. The difference is only relevant if we are dealing with a diminutive

used as a type 5) manipulative. Alonso, on the whole, seems to prefer a listener-based sub-categorisation, where I would prefer to use a speaker-based system using as the main parameter the intention of the speaker.

3.12.1 Self-Expression

Expressions of pleasure or enjoyment often take a diminutive. The diminutive emphasises the emotional aspects e.g.: Du. een lekker wijntje 'a nice little wine'. Similarly the Portuguese normally drink um cafêzinho 'a coffee + Dim'; also Sp. mi pueblecito! 'my village + Dim'. Expressions of shock, anger, or surprise commonly take a diminutive suffix in Spanish and Portuguese - although examples occur in other languages e.g.: Sp. por diosito! 'by God + Dim', Por. palavrinha! 'my word'.

3.12.1 Affecting Others

Insults are the typical form of a negative subjective diminutive. They are much rarer than the positive type, although examples occur in most of the languages studied e.g.:[kaβusi] in Lumasaaba refers to 'a small undergrown goat'; the Dutch insult lulletje rozewater is insulting largely because of its diminutive form. An interesting point here is that the more formal the domain, the more insulting a diminutive if it is used, because it challenges the formality. The exception to this is the manipulative diminutive we shall discuss below. The point is illustrated by the use of diminutives by the great Spanish playwrights of the 17th century, who used diminutive forms of each others' names to belittle each other; thus Quevedo wrote to Góngora

> Yo te untaré mis versos con tocino porque no me los roas, Gongorilla
>
> "for you I will spread fat on my verses so you will not steal them from me Gongora + Dim"

Gongora, in his turn, wrote to Lope de Vega:

> Por tu vida, Lopillo, que me borres las diecinueve torres de tu escudo
>
> "please, Lope + Dim, wipe for me those 19 towers from your coat of arms"
>
> (quoted by Alonso 1951:203)

Expressions of pity may be linked with endearment. If someone is pitiable it is usually because he or she is helpless, in need of protection, like a child perhaps e.g.:

Sp.	pobrecito	'poor little one'
Sc.Gae.	brðnag	'sorrowful woman'

All types of diminutives can be used to manipulate. In these cases diminutives are used not to express some inner feeling but to influence other people. I have isolated 5 sub-classes of manipulative diminutives.

(a) Politeness, reverential: it was already mentioned in 3.9.3 that a reverential use of diminutives is quite common. This is supported by the close links between reverentials and diminutives in many languages. A more general sense of politeness can often be expressed by a diminutive e.g.: Por.obrigadinha 'thank you very much' or Cat. esperi's un momentet, si us plau 'wait just a moment + Dim' please'.

(b) Even more widespread is the use of diminutives for playing down a serious matter by using a diminutive euphemism. In this way, the name of the devil takes a diminutive form in many languages e.g.: Ice. djöfsi, djefsi, déssi etc; or Bas. aḑar; Sco. clootie etc. Terms for death or serious disease often take a diminutive form for these reasons e.g.: Du. het hoekje om gaan (lit. 'to go around the little corner') 'to die' or

van Lotje getikt 'insane'; Por. ir para os anjinhos (lit. 'to go to the little angels') 'to die'. This sense of playing down something may also be used in other areas. When Ian MacGregor, the chairman of the National Coal Board said on 16th May 1984 about the miner's strike that it was a little temporary problem on the other side of town, he was playing down its importance. In daily life, there are many examples of the playing-down use of diminutives e.g.: Cat. un ataquet ben portat 'a well carried out little attack'; Du. kunt u een ogenblikje wachten? 'could you wait a moment + Dim'? (cf. also a. above).

Alonso (1951:213) gives an example from Doña Perfecta by Perez Galdős: Cuándo será la mejor hora para hablar al señor don José de un .... de un asuntillo? - De un asuntillo? Ahora mismo. "When would be the best time to talk to don José about .... about a little matter? - About a little matter? Right now."

Words which are normally considered obscene can become somehow less obscene if they are diminutivised; their effect is thus played down. Alonso (ibid. 212) gives an example from an adultery case in Santo Domingo where the witness changed his use of singando 'fucking' in the local dialect to singandito - after objections from the judge.

(c) Under the pleading and placating heading, we can distinguish two sub-types: first of all there is an area - which could be linked with (a) and (b) - of diminutives used in the relationship with what we could loosely describe

as the supernatural. These diminutives may be inspired by fear of the unknown. The term the little people is of this type; it refers to the fairies, with their magical power which could be used to our disadvantage. In many languages these diminutives may combine both fearful respect and endearment e.g. Que.: taytacha milagrochá 'could it be a miracle of the Father + Dim' (Aztec reverentials serve both these functions too); Sw.Ger.: Bergli 'mountain + Dim', Wetterli 'thunderstorm + Dim'. I would suggest that the use of the diminutive -bu to refer to ritual objects in Tibetan is also related to this type of diminutive use. The other sub-type is what we could call the "beggar's diminutive". This involves the use of diminutives with a view of making the addressee do something to the speaker's advantage. It is used to ask favours and is most commonly used by beggars asking for money. Alonso (1951:208) calls these "professional diminutives" e.g.: from Alonso:

> Hermanita no hay una limosnita pa este pobresito bardaito que está esmayaito
>
> 'sister + Dim, have you no alms + Dim for this poor + Dim bard + Dim who is fainting + Dim'

Kempen (1940:60) gives an example from Afrikaans of the pleading diminutive:

> Gee nou vir ons 'n klein plekkie langs die transportpad om vir ons daar 'n huisietjie op te sit
>
> 'please give us a little plot + Dim along the transport-track so we can build a house + Dim + Dim on it.'

(d) Possibly again related to the above is what we could call "the salesman's diminutive". This refers to the frequent use of diminutives by salesmen, shopkeepers, stall-holders etc. advertising their wares. Bertoldi, quoted by Sieberer (1950), mentions several examples collected in Rome: pisellini, brocolletti, carciofini, fagiolini etc. In the Netherlands one may hear een lekker harinkje mevrouw? 'a nice little herring, madam?'. The widespread use of diminutive forms for product names in English and French is possibly related to these (cf. English and French sections in Appendix A for examples).

(e) Finally, there is the humorous use of diminutives. Any diminutive can be included here if it is used out of context e.g.: Little John for Robin Hood's enormous "merry man"; or describing a wine in Dutch as een lekker wijntje, when one is drinking a 1904 vintage port.

3.12.3 Mixed Type

The language used by and to children is the most productive area for diminutives in any language, a fact which has been recognised by all writers on diminutives and which I therefore do not need to pursue any further. Diminutives are used both when speaking to children e.g.:

Eng.: Who is my little baby then?

Ger.: Was machtchen das Kindchen dennchen?
'What does + Dim the child + Dim then + Dim'
(Sieberer 1950/2:88)

and when referring to children e.g.:

Por.: adoro o meu filhinho
'I adore my little son'

In fact, anything to do with children may be diminutivised and in this area, diminutive becomes very productive, affecting lexical categories which do not normally form diminutives. It is in this area that the so-called "Satzdeminutiv" or 'sentence diminutive' is at its most productive.[15] In this way, a child's body parts, toys, games etc. may be diminutivised. Even in English there are many such examples: nappies, botty, potty: Yiddish ślōf-ink-en 'sleep + Dim' specifically refers to children as does Danish sovse 'sleep + Dim'. Three are many more examples in Appendix A.

Lover's language is often similar to child language in its use of diminutives albeit that this is usually more limited to direct address than in child language e.g.:

Sp. ya estamos los dos solitos
'now we are alone.+ Dim together'

This use of diminutives referring to a third person does occur in love songs and love-poetry, which are of course less personal. Examples of these are quoted in the Yiddish and Portuguese sections of Appendix A among others. The following stanza from a Yiddish song, contains a few examples:

"Herelex wi sejdn-web gelokte
tsejndelex wi perelex getokte
Ejgelex, wi himl-bloj in friling
lipelex, wi karschelex a tswiling."

'hair + Dim pl. like finely woven
silk / teeth + Dim like twined pearls + Dim /
eyes + Dim, blue like the sky
in Spring / a pair of lips + Dim like
cherries + Dim'

As with children, body-parts are often the subject of the diminutive in the language of lovers. A weakened form of these two categories is perhaps the way to describe the next area - that of friendship, camaraderie etc. being expressed and communicated by the use of diminutives. The word 'friend' itself often forms diminutives:

Fr.: mon petit ami

Por.: minha querida amiguinha 'my dear friend + Dim + f'

Lit.: bičiũlis 'dear friend'

Rus.: družočyok 'friend + Dim int.'

Lap.: us'tibaž'žan 'dear friend!'

Tib.: zla'u 'friend + Dim'

Que.: amiguča 'good friend'

This is extended to language use in general in an atmosphere of friendship and camaraderie, where greetings may be affected e.g.: Por. Até loguinho! 'see you soon + Dim' and various objects and activities like Du. een borreltje drinken 'to drink a (wee) dram' etc.

The final category, that of familiar objects and places, is very widespread. Frequent exposure to an object or place creates a special relationship with and an affection for that object or place. It is drawn into one of the above areas as it were. Diminutives thus used both express the affection felt for the object or place and communicate these feelings to others. The words affected often refer to objects in the home, familiar foods, the tools of one's trade, one's house, home-town or village, country, geographical phenomena and domestic animals and the animals and plants in one's natural environment. Many examples may be found in Appendix A of which I will mention just a few here:

Du.:	een viertje	'a Renault 4'
	madeliefje	'daisy'
	amsterdammertje	'small cast-iron pole to prevent cars from parking on the pavements in Amsterdam
Dan.:	bungalowser	'bungalows + Dim'
Sc.Gae.:	gleannan	'glen + Dim'
	crùisgean	'a kind of oil-lamp; cruisie'
Surs.:	alpetga	'alp + Dim'
Sp.:	La Pilarica	'La Virgen del Pilar, patron saint of Saragossa'
Rom.:	carne de purcel	'pork'
Lit.:	dilgėlẽ	'nettle'
	kirstūkas	'chisel'
Que.:	llamacha	'llama + Dim'
	lawacha	'corn-meal porridge + Dim'

Considerable overlap exists between the various categories. I maintain though that these categories are not arbitrary, but links naturally exist between the various areas in which diminutives are used. Perhaps the following quotation from Sieberer (1950-52:99) sums up in a sense the general principles behind the use of diminutives:

> "Wir lieben das Schwache und Kleine weit mehr, behandeln darüber hinaus noch manches, als ob es schwach und klein sei, und verschenken daran gern unsere obsorge und unsere lobende Anteilnahme - nicht zuletzt deshalb, weil dadurch unser Selbst - und Wertbewusstsein neue Nahrung bekommt. Angesichts des Grossen, Starken, Überragenden beschleicht uns hingegen leicht ein Unbehagen ob der eigenen Unbedeutung und Verwundbarkeit, ein Unbehagen, das sich leicht in vehemente, wenn auch versteckte Abneigung umsetzt, vor allem aber in ein Streben nach Herabsetzung."

3.12.4 Diminutive Domains

It is already quite clear from what has been said so far that diminutives are on the whole limited to the less formal sociolinguistic

domains. Lázaro Mora (1976) found that when trying to determine which words could form diminutives, the situation in which a word is used is often more important than its meaning or form. We should once again make the distinction between objective and subjective diminutives. In a diglossic situation, for example, subjective diminutives are restricted to the less formal of the two codes. Thus in German-speaking Switzerland, subjective diminutives are restricted to Swiss German - although interference may occur - and in Paraguay, they are largely limited to Guaraní. Objective diminutives may be found anywhere and in English, for example, these are fairly productive in the area of scientific terminology e.g.: toadlet, froglet, ringlets (around Saturn) and the newly productive suffix -ino is even restricted to the academic domain of particle physics: photino, neutrino etc. In literature, diminutives are most frequent in the emotional genre of poetry, especially love-poetry. Otherwise, diminutives are used as markers of colloquial language.

3.12.5 Frequency of Use

These are of course very general statements and there is little actual hard evidence to back them up. Analyses have been carried out of the frequency of diminutives, especially in the Romance languages. I refer to Ettinger (1974; 1980) and to Hasselrot (1957) who presents some of his own statistics and also briefly mentions similar work in other Romance languages, in particular in Chapter VIII. Kempen (1940) carried out a comparative analysis of the frequency of use of diminutives in Dutch and Afrikaans. However all of these diminutive counts are based on literary sources and they are therefore of somewhat limited interest. Any reference in Appendix A to frequency of use is based on impressions

by bilingual informants, including myself, or on statements by often bilingual individuals describing the language and commenting upon the matter. There are considerable differences in how often individual languages use diminutives and these differences extend to the dialects. One does not need to carry out a count to observe that the Swiss and the Austrians use far more diminutives than the people of North Germany, that the Andean people use more diminutives than the Castilians or even that Afrikaans uses more diminutives than standard Dutch. There is also some evidence that frequency of use is linked with the number of lexical categories that may be diminutivised. In standard English, which is relatively diminutive-free, fewer categories can be affected than in Portuguese, which is relatively rich in diminutives. Thus the number of suffixes actually available has no bearing on the matter. This will be investigated further in Chapter 8.

Footnotes

1. I found this to be the case when I presented a paper on the subject. "Emotion" is not clearly present with many non-notional diminutives. The distinction is thus really between the presence and absence of subjectivity of any kind.

2. This suffix will be discussed in Chapter 7.

3. An interesting point that may or may not be significant is the fact that like diminutives, the sense of 'belonging to' or 'originating from' is often expressed by a high front vowel or palatal or palato-alveolar consonant. Consider the following: Bangali, Hindi, Pakistani, 'from or of Bengal' etc; Ashkenazi, lit, 'of or from Germany' (cf. Malkiel (1978:147-8 on this suffix and its semitic origin). In Scottish Gaelic the genitive singular is expressed by means of palatalisation, among other processes: clann 'children, clan', cloinne (genitive).

Genitive is marked by -i in Latin, -ya in Sanskrit, -i, in Armenian and Albanian etc. This phenomenon extends beyond the Indo-European periphery, as is shown by the Quechua "possessor" suffixes, which, in the singular, are -y/j/, -yki, and in the plural -yku, -nčis, -ykičis e.g.:

wasi	'house'	wasiy	'my house'	
		wasiyku	'our house' (exclusive)	
		wasinčis	'our house' (inclusive)	etc.

(cf. Solá et al 1972:I:4-7)

Perhaps this deserves some investigation.

4. In Italian this takes the form oliveto, without the Italian -etto suffix.

5. cf. Hasselrot (1957:289ff & Chapter VI).

6. For the arguments relating neuter to diminutive see Jespersen (1929:239-40).

7. viz. Hasselrot (1957:134ff) for similar material from other Romance languages, he also gives some references.

8. The Lithuanians were not Christianised until the late 14th century under Jagiello (1377-1434) who became King of Poland. This is much later than neighbouring countries.

9. :but: *tally; and fatty, but *thinny.

10. I refer to van Marle (1981) for a detailed analysis of these forms in Dutch.

11. This is not true for Breton where diminutive adjectives are formed quite productively by means of the suffix -ik as we shall see below.

12. Though in these languages the nominalising type exists too.

13. Also known as minutive, imminutive, iminutive etc.

14. see also on this: Uhlenbeck-Winkel (1981).

15. The term "Satzdeminutiv" was first used by Leo Spitzer (1918:201-2). Sieberer (1950-52:88) uses the term "Satzdeminution" without referring to Spitzer. Spitzer explains that these "sentence diminutives" are triggered by the "Stimmung" or mood of the speaker. The term is also used by Alonso (1930 & 1951). It is probably most common in languages that employ consonant symbolism to express the diminutive (see Chapter 4).

4. Morphology

4.1 Introduction

Synthetic diminutives are generally considered to be part of the derivational morphology. The various issues concerning the morphology of diminutives are treated in two separate chapters. The present chapter will be dealing primarily with the forms in which the synthetic diminutive appears in languages around the world. The processes by which these forms are produced will be discussed in Chapter 6. Any examples may be found in Appendix A.

4.2 Diminutive Formation

Around the world a great variety of different processes are used for the formation of diminutives.

The most commonly used is suffixation, which involves the addition of a diminutive morpheme to the end of a base or to its stem:

$$[[x]_y \ dim]$$

In Bantu languages, prefixation is used. This involves adding a diminutive morpheme to the front of a base.[1]

$$[dim \ [x]_y]_y$$

Another possibility is reduplication. In this case the diminutive morpheme is realised as a form identical to the base or to part of it. This could be considered a form of suffixation or prefixation in which the diminutive morpheme has no fixed realisation, but its form is determined by the form of the base:

$$[[x]_y \ dim]_y \rightarrow [xx]_y$$

Finally there are a number of processes affecting one or more of the phonemes within the root:

$$[[x]_y \ dim]_y \rightarrow [x']_y$$

These processes of modification can take various forms; from a vowel change to a change in tone to subtraction, i.e. the removal of part of the root. In many languages two or more of the basic processes outlined above are combined to form diminutives. In addition to the above, a number of languages use a kind of infix between the root and the suffix.[2] These often find their origin in assimilation processes. Examples of these are found in Italian, Spanish and Portuguese as well as Dutch and Afrikaans. Other languages use an extra suffix as a diminutive intensifier, which has to come between the root and the diminutive suffix. These occur in Slavic as well as Yiddish and Hungarian:

$$[[[x]_y \text{ dim Int}]_y \text{ Dim}]_y$$

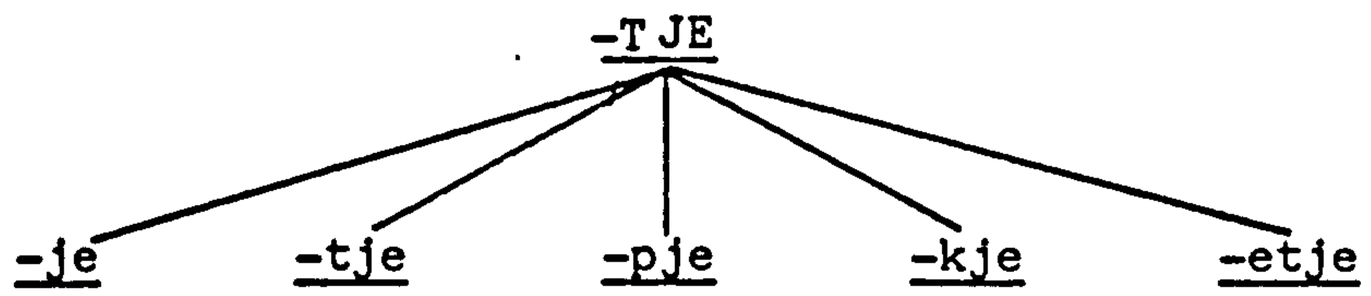
4.3 Suffixation

This is by far the most widespread method for expressing diminution. It is used throughout Indo-European, in many Amerindian languages, in some Southern Bantu languages (in addition to the class-prefix) and in many Asian and Australian languages. The suffixes used in suffixation realise the diminutive morpheme, often combined with other elements. Thus -ito in Spanish not only expresses a diminutive, it also includes gender and number. This has led some romanists to propose -it- as a suffix, to which gender and number can then be added as extra suffixes in a specified regular order:

casa - it - a - s
N - DIM -gender-number

However, problems may arise once we consider a suffix like -ín, used in the North-West of Spain, which realises both diminutive and masculine , whereas the feminine form has an additional -a. These problems are considered in some detail by Jaeggli (1980)(see also 6.3.1).

It has already been shown that many languages have a choice of more than one suffix to express diminutives. The number of suffixes available can vary greatly from one language to another. Many have only two, often a masculine and a feminine one, as for example in Gaelic and to some extent in Lithuanian. In Basque, more than twenty suffixes can be used with a diminutive sense. In some languages, these different suffixes reflect different historical stages of the language; e.g. -let in English is older than -ette (cf. 7.3). They can also reflect different degrees of productivity; again in English, -ette is more productive than -ock (see 6.2.2 and Appendix A). In Dutch, the different suffixes can all be reduced to phonologically conditioned allomorphs of one morpheme: (cf. also 6.1)



In some languages each suffix has developed its own specialised meaning within the field of diminutive. This trend of variety leading to specialisation is discussed in Chapter 3, and in a historical context in Chapter 7. In other languages the range of suffixes reflects dialect variation. In Spanish, for example, each dialect only uses a few of the suffixes used over the whole of the Spanish-speaking world (see map Appendix A). Thus -uc- for example is used mainly in Santander. In Italy -in- is considered a typically Tuscan suffix, even though it is used throughout the North. In these languages, where several suffixes exist side by side, many have specialised and only combine with certain groups of words, or are more frequently used with some words than with others. Ettinger (1974:143) treats these different

suffixes in Italian as allomorphs of a {DIMINUTIVE} morpheme. If a noun can be combined with several different suffixes, then -ett- is usually more objective diminutive; -in- has positive connotations and -ucc- has negative connotations (143), e.g.:

caro	'dear' ('expensive or affectionate')
∨	
car-ett-o	'a bit expensive'
∨	
car-in-o	'very dear' (affectionate)

(Ettinger 1974:144)

Ettinger represents the relations between these 3 suffixes in combination with monosyllabic roots in a diagram (141):

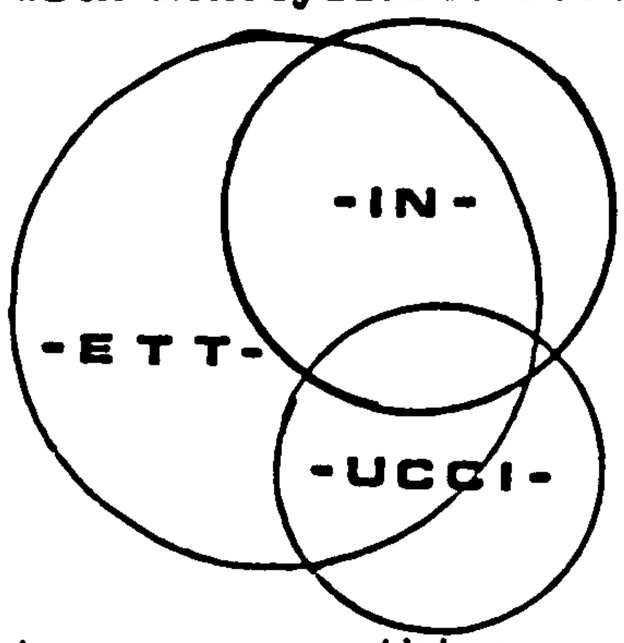


Figure 4.1

This does not cover everything - as forms in <-n-> never take -in- and those in <-t> never take -ett-. (Ettinger 1984:90)

e.g. fetta - fett-ucci-a

fett-in-a 'slice' + Dim

*fett-ett-a

But it does show in general terms how the suffixes interrelate.

Suffixation is often combined with other processes. Most of these are shared by other morphemes in that particular language. Thus in German, Swiss German, Yiddish and Frisian a form of modification affecting the vowel of the root is used with diminutives. In German, North Frisian, Yiddish and Swiss German certain plurals use the same change:

e.g. German: Haus --- Häuschen (dim)

--- Häuser (pl.)

Sw.Ger. hund --- hündli (dim)

--- hünd (pl.)

In certain languages, diminutive suffixes belong to a class of suffixes which cause a change in gender. This is the case in most Germanic languages,

e.g. Ger.: der Mann(m) --- das Männlein(n)

Du.: de auto (m/f) --- het autootje (n) 'car + DIM'

Yid.: di toxter (f) --- dus téxterl (n)

der foigl (m) --- dus faigele (n)

In most of the examples in our data the suffix is simply added to the complete root of the word being diminutivised. In many languages, however the roots of some words are subjected to subtraction first and the suffix is then added to this shorter root;

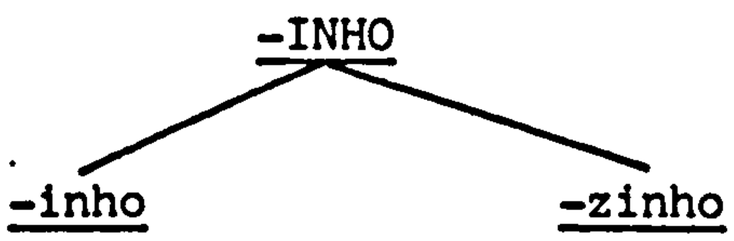
e.g. Sp.: casa --- cas-ita[3]

Por.: olho --- olh-inho

In these languages a final vowel on a multisyllabic root is deleted before the suffix is added, to avoid a V#V sequence. Another phenomenon also occurs in Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

This is the insertion of a kind of 'infix' between the root and the suffix. It could be considered a different allomorph of the suffix,

e.g. Por.:



But, as the occurrence of this element is not always predictable, it is probably better to treat is as a separate element to be inserted in certain cases. This is in fact how most romanists treat it.[4]

In Dutch and Afrikaans, too, some kind of sandhi phenomenon takes place between roots and nouns. Unlike the system outlined above, the Dutch[5] system is very largely predictable and is therefore more appropriately analysed as a morpheme with a large number of allomorphs, which was shown in 4.3. It is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Finally a number of languages, mainly in Eastern Europe and Central Europe use "infixes" - in fact additional suffixes placed between the root and the diminutive suffix and not occurring without the latter - to form the diminutive intensifier. Forms of this kind occur in the Slavic languages and Hungarian, e.g.:

Czech: dům -- domek 'house + dim'

dům -- dom-eč-ek 'house + dim int'

$$N - \begin{Bmatrix} dim \\ int \end{Bmatrix} - dim$$

(Lee & Lee 1964:145)

4.3.1 Accumulation

In some languages a series of diminutive suffixes can be attached to the root, usually only to nouns. These are different from the examples of diminutive intensifiers in Slavic and Hungarian, because those can not be used by themselves as autonomous suffixes. Accumulation consists of a series of suffixes - often though not always fully productive - which can also express a diminutive when used by themselves. Despite the fact that the accumulating

languages are in the minority, they can be found all over the world. In Afrikaans, examples are relatively rare (in Dutch they do not even exist at all) but Kempen (1940) gives a few examples. In each case not more than two suffixes are used, e.g.: ferweelbroek-ie-tjie 'velvet trousers + dim + dim'

stukk-ie-tjie 'piece + dim + dim'

(Kempen 1940:57)

In a later work Kempen (1969) has discovered more examples:

huis-ie-tjie 'house + dim + dim'

blaar-tjie-tjie[6] 'blister + dim + dim'

Kempen does admit that these are rare and he has not been able to find any examples of these accumulated diminutives in the literature.[7] In Ayacucho Quechua, examples of accumulation aré also rare, but they involve a doubling of the same suffix -ča. The phenomenon is limited to certain standard expressions, and is certainly not fully productive, e.g.:

čika-ča-ča-n 'very greatly'

Ťiw-ča-ča-n 'every last one'

(Parker 1969:60)

In several Romance languages, however, a very productive and dynamic system of accumulation exists. In Portuguese only the Brazilians productively repeat the same suffix:[8]

ovos fresqu-inho-z-inho-s 'fresh + dim + dim eggs'

(Hasselrot 1957:277)

In metropolitan Portuguese, accumulation of suffixes is less common than in Spanish or Italian, however this is only true for modern Portuguese. A number of constructions from Old Portuguese survive, but none of these is fully productive and most of them involve only augmentative suffixes. A few combine augmentative

and diminutive suffixes:

pouco	'(a) little'
v	
pouc-och-ito	'(a) little + aug + dim'
pouc-och-inho	
casa	'house'
v	
cas-inh-ota	'house + dim + aug '

(Ettinger 1974:228; see also Portuguese section Appendix A)

In Spanish too, combinations are limited to two suffixes and again a diminutive is usually combined with an augmentative suffix,

e.g.:	pálido	'pale'
	v	
	palid-uch-ín	'pale + aug + dim'

(Ettinger 1974:270)

Ettinger (1974:272) gives a few examples with two diminutive suffixes:

café	'coffee'
v	
caf-et-ín	
carro	'cart, car'
v	
carr-et-illo	
casa	
v	
cas-et-ita	

Italian has the most productive accumulation system. Here too, many involve a combination of augmentative and diminutive suffixes, but combinations of two diminutive suffixes are also quite common:

carro	---	carr-ett-in-o	'cart + dim + dim'
giacca	---	giacch-ett-in-a	'jacket, coat + dim + dim'
colle	---	coll-in-ett-a	'hill + dim + dim'

This last order of suffixes is actually very rare; cf. Ettinger (1974:165).

fiore	---	fior-c-ell-in-o	'flower + dim + dim'

Theoretically it is possible to accumulate even more suffixes, but in practice this is rarely done other than for special, usually humorous, effect. In all these languages, the order in which suffixes can accumulate is subject to fairly strict rules, which will be discussed for Italian, Spanish and Portuguese in the relevant sections of Appendix A.

4.4 Prefixation

The only languages in our data that use prefixation are the Bantu languages and Kalispelm, a Salish language of the Pacific North-West. Prefixation in Bantu is less straight-forward in relation to diminutives than suffixation as discussed in the previous section. The difference is that diminutive is not actually expressed by a prefix. To understand this a short outline of Bantu nouns is necessary. This is given in Appendix A.

Bantu diminutives are different from those which are expressed derivationally. While in the latter case the diminutive can be considered "marked" in relation to its non-diminutive counterpart, in Bantu no such distinction exists. In addition there is a certain optionality inherent in the dual role of each category, as both a gender class and a diminutive or augmentative class, as Greenberg (1966:82) points out:

> "In European languages normal size, the unmarked member, always has zero expression. In languages of the Bantu group and elsewhere where there are diminutive or augmentative classes (the latter often pejorative), there is facultative expression of small or large size, that is the normal gender can also be used for small or large objects."

The classes used for diminutives are not the same in each language.

In the Bantu languages discussed in Appendix A, the 7th prefix

is used for diminutive singular in: Swahili, Kongo and Fernandian.

This prefix takes the form ki- in Swahili and in Kongo. In some cases ke- in Kongo and usually si- or s- in Fernandian (spoken on the island of Fernando Poo), e.g.:

Swa. mlima 'mountain' --- kilima 'hill'

uvuli 'shade' --- kivuli 'shadow'

In Kongo reduplication of the stem takes place as well as prefixation:

omuntu 'man, person'

ki-muntu-muntu 'man + dim'

Fern. boso 'fire'

siso 'fire + dim' (examples from Bleek 1971)

In the Middle Branch languages the 13th class is commonly used for diminutive singular. It takes the following forms:

ka-: may occur in all the languages in question

k-: before vowels in Kikamba

ga-: in Nano

dsh-: before vowels in Dikele

a-: before consonants in Dikele

y-: before some vowels in Benga, Dualla, Isubu.

e-: often occurs in Benga, Dualla, Isubu and Fernandian.

Examples: (from Bleek 1971)

Tette & Sena: pîri 'hill' kapiri 'hillock'

Otyi̯hererõ: ontera 'the bird' oka ð era 'the little bird'

Lumasaaba: [cice:lo] 'a broom' [kake:lo] 'a small broom'

(last example from Brown 1972:11)

Diminutive plural in Swahili involves a shifting into class 8, which takes the form vi-:

kilima --- vilima 'dim-plu + hill'

kivuli --- vivuli 'dim-plu + shadow'

In addition Swahili uses a prefix -j(i). It is used as well as ki- where the root is monosyllabic or starts with a vowel.[9]

mji 'town' kijiji 'hamlet'

If -j(i)- is inserted before disyllabic roots which do not have an initial vowel, it has derogatory connotations.

Other languages use the 12th prefix TU- for diminutive plural. Tette, Sena, Kikámba, Angola and Fernandian are examples of these. In Fernandian this prefix takes the forms to-, tw- or t-.

Examples:

Angola:	kamusete	'little box'	tumusete	'little boxes'
Tette & Sena:	kadzámba	'small leaf'	tumadzámba	'small leaves'
Fernandian:	sínodi	'a small bird'	tonodi	'small birds'

In Otyihererő, the 14th prefix BU- can be used for diminutive plural, among other things.[10] In all Middle Branch languages it takes the form u- e.g. Oty.: okaðera --- ouðera 'the little birds'

The situation is not as straight-forward as the above outline would suggest. In addition to the shift into a specific noun-class, a number of Bantu languages use other processes to express diminutive. I have already mentioned total reduplication in Kɔngo as one of these. In addition, a number of Southern Bantu languages use suffixes for diminutives. These are used only to express diminutives. In many of the languages the appropriate prefix is not used; others use it in addition to the suffix. The suffix used is -(ay)ana. It is used in the Zulu dialects, Xhosa and Tsonga among others. Xhosa combines suffixation with a form of consonant symbolism and Tsonga uses the same processes in addition to a shift into the 7th noun class e.g.:

nkhuvo 'feast' xinkhubyana 'little feast'

which can be analysed as follows:

XI	-- NKUBY --	ANA
7th prefix	pal. bilab.	dim. suff.

(Louw 1975/6:248)

The consonant symbolism takes the form of palatalisation of labials and will be discussed in 4.6 and Appendix A.

An advantage of this system of suffixation is that a noun which already belongs to the diminutivising class can also be diminutivised:

Tsonga: xipfimbo 'kind of cork' xipfimbyana 'small cork'

Normally if a small object or more usually a small animal belongs not to the "small" class but to another one it can be diminutivised by changing the class, with derogatory connotations, e.g. in Lumasaaba, which uses class 13 KA- for diminutive singular:

[imbusi] 'a goat'
v

[ime:me] 'a kid goat'
v

[kaβusi] 'a small (undergrown) goat'

(Brown 1972:12)

4.5 Reduplication

It was mentioned in 4.2, that reduplication could be seen as a form of suffixation or prefixation. This is also suggested by Matthews' (1974:126) statement that reduplication could be considered as a process of "'addition' in which the formative is not a constant but has a basic form determined (either wholly or in part) by the form of the operand itself".

There are quite a few examples of partial reduplication in our data. Tozzer (1921:29) reports on this phenomenon in Maya.

In Maya the first syllable is reduplicated:

e.g. kah 'pueblo' --- kakah 'small pueblo'

(Tozzer 1921:34)

Kwakiutl uses prefixal reduplication in addition to suffixation, a vowel change in the added syllable and consonant symbolism:

jo:k 'house' --- ja:?jojum 'little house'

In this case part of the prefix is specified and reduplication always takes the /a:/ vowel. (Boas 1911:526). Kwakiutl is one of a small group of languages in the American North-West coastal and inland region which use reduplication to express diminutive. According to Sherzer (1976) noun-stem reduplication is used in Sahaptin, Nez Perce, Kwakiutl and the Salish languages. Verb-stem reduplication to express verbal diminution is used in Kwakiutl, Quileute and the Salish languages (see map).

As the system is not used in the rest of North America there seems to be some sort of regional phenomenon which may have spread to neighbouring languages from one particular language in the area. Which one this might be is difficult to find out.

A similar development cannot be proposed for diminutive reduplication in Africa, where most of the other examples in our data occur.

Westermann (1973:164) mentions reduplication in West-African languages. Here we actually find complete reduplication as in:

Ewe: kítsi 'tiny' ('winzig') --- kítsikitsi 'very tiny'

Westermann related this type of diminutive to distributives, which would normally refer to an object in many small parts. In Efik many words for 'small' or 'little' ('klein') use complete reduplication:

itip-itip, ibi-ibio, imuk-imuk, nsuho-nsuho, ɔsɔp-ɔsɔp, niŋiniŋi, ŋkeŋe-ŋkeŋe, ŋerá-ŋerat. (164)

Partial reduplication expresses a diminutive sense in Jaunde:

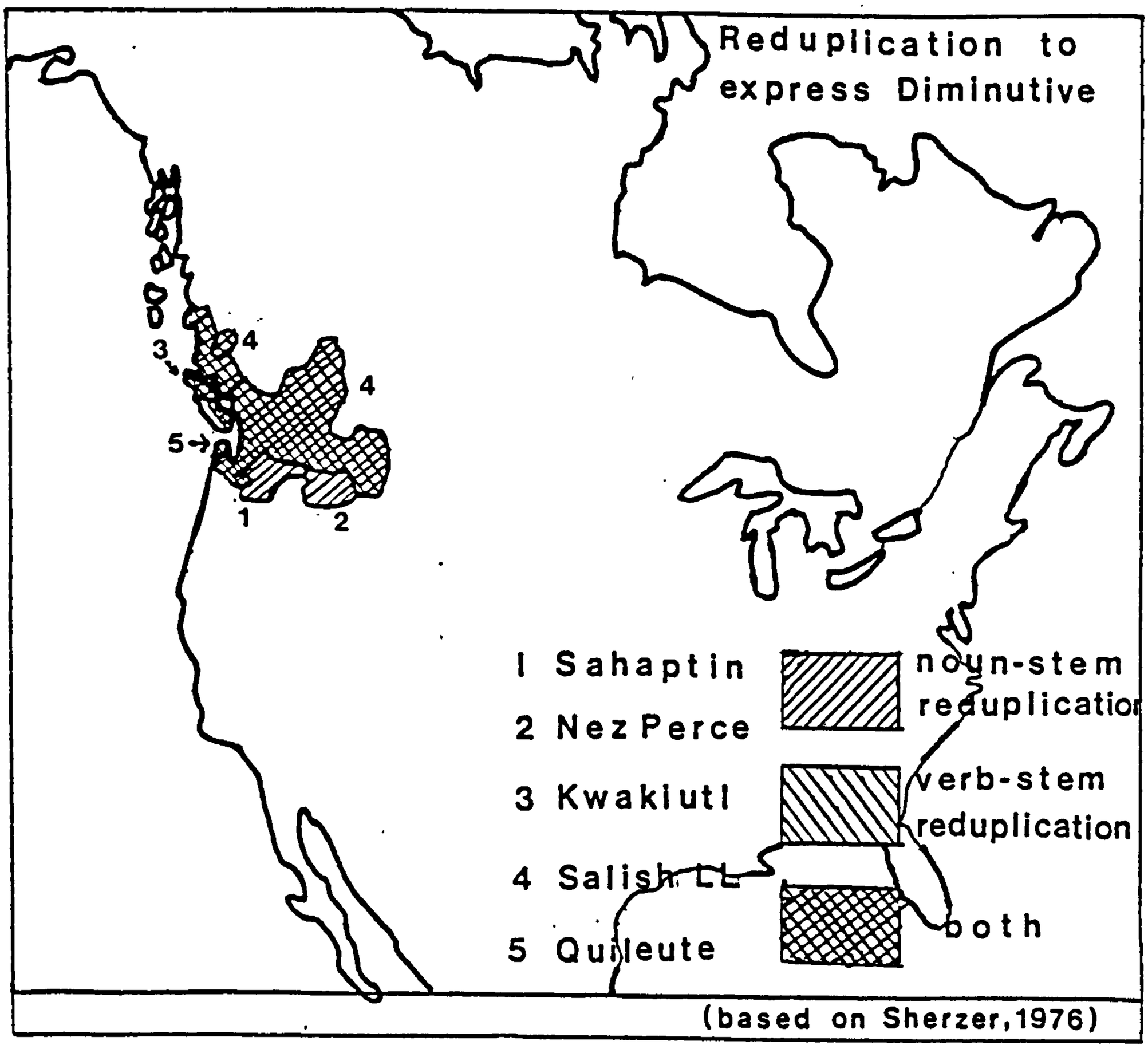
nda	'house'	ondenda	'small house'
mot	'man'	omomot	'small man'

(Nekes 1913:23)

In Section 4.4 it was mentioned that Kongo, a Middle Branch Bantu language uses reduplication. It uses complete reduplication in addition to prefixation:

muana	'son, child'	kimuanamuana	'a little child'

(Bleek 1971:125)



Thun (1963:144) mentions a large number of examples of reduplicatives in English, which seem to be linked with the realm of diminutives. Many have diminutive suffixes and Thun links them frequently with child-language and the language of the nursery, an area often implicated in frequent use of diminutives. Some examples of these reduplicatives expressing smallness are:[11]

bitsy-witsy, inky-dinky, peerie-weerie, teeny-weeny, etc.

It is not clear, though, to what extent reduplication contributes to the diminutive sense of these words and it is definitely of a different type than the examples outlined for American and African languages.

4.6 Modification

An almost infinite variety of modification processes is used in the world's diminutive systems. Many are combined with some other process, like umlaut+suffix in German. I will concentrate in this section on those systems that use some form of modification only, or primarily to express a diminutive. Within Europe there are some examples of these. Jespersen (1933:316) mentions an example in Hungarian, where the change of a vowel to /i/ can express a diminutive, e.g.:

madárka 'bird' --- madirka 'little birdie'

Basque has a very productive system of consonant modification to express diminutives. Next to a large number of diminutive suffixes incorporating a palatal or palato-alveolar fricative like /ʃ/, diminutives are often expressed by palatalising[12] one or more of the consonants in a word, e.g.:

/s/	zakur	'dog'
	v	
/ʃ/	xakur	'little dog'

This can be taken one step further:

/tj/ ttattur 'very little dog'

Here both initial and medial consonants are affected. Fricatives are most susceptible to palatalisation, followed by stops.[13] In its most developed form this system allows a palatal prosody to affect the whole word. This type of modification is usually described as diminutive consonant symbolism, a term introduced by Amerindian scholars, who were often confronted with this phenomenon.

Unlike reduplication, consonantal symbolism is very widespread in North America (see map). Most languages using this device are West of the Rocky Mountains[14] and Nichols (1971) divides their symbolism systems into three principal categories: a) hardness shifts; b) tonality shifts; c) dental resonant shifts.

In class a, the place of articulation is unchanged but "a more forceful manner of articulation signals the diminutive" (828/9).

This takes the following forms:

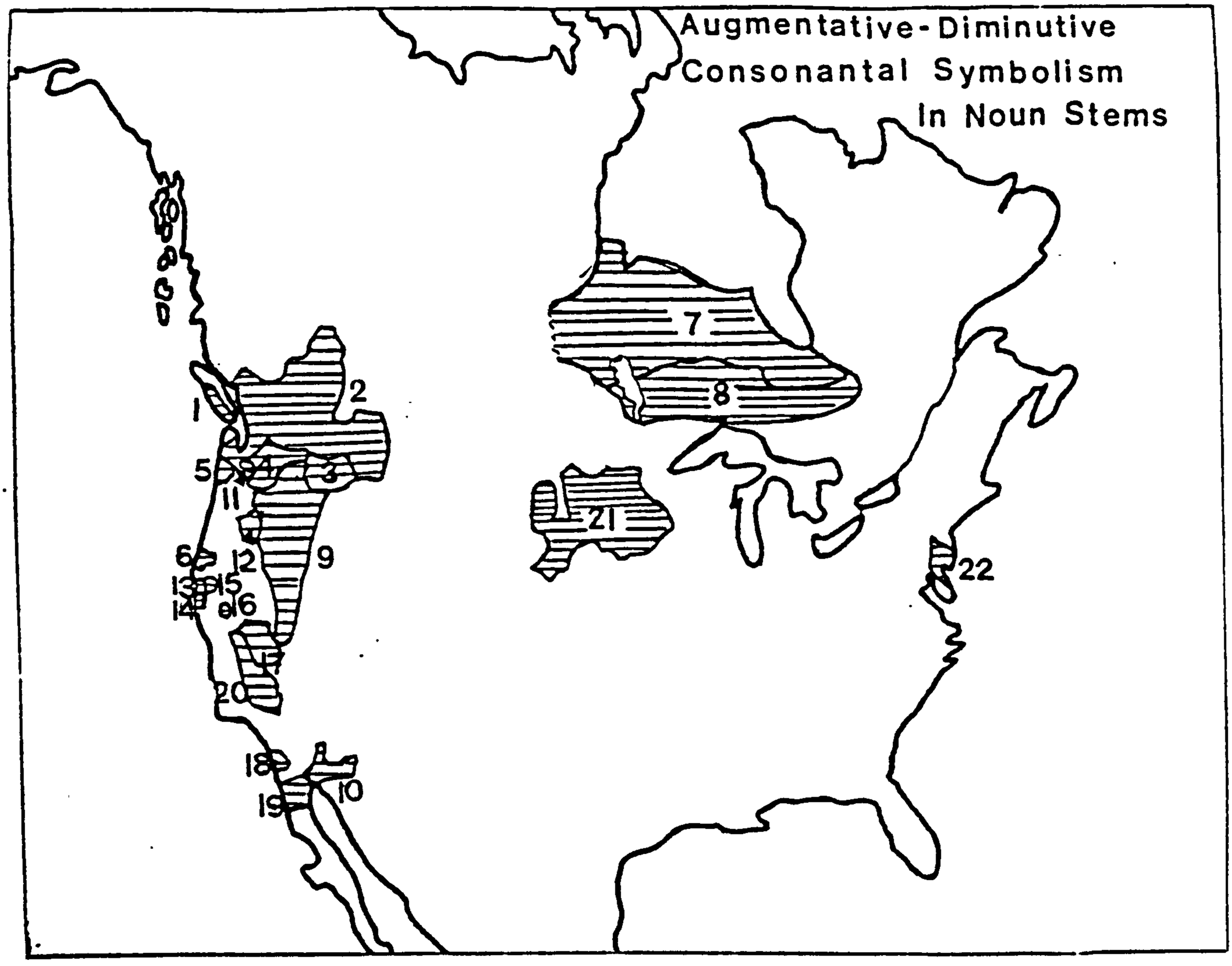
s - c[15]	Northern Paiute, Nez Perce, Wishram	
t - λ	Coos	
lenis stop - fortis stop - ejective	Wishram	
sonorant - glottalised	Kalispelm, Coeur d'Alene, Twana, Snohomish(?)[16]	
θ - ƨ	Karok	
s - č	Southern Sierra Miwok	
s - k	Coos	
w - b	Hupa	

(Nichols 1971:828)

The second type (class b) is divided into two subgroups. The first includes shifts from palato-alveolar or retroflex to dental or alveolar, "in which the pitch of the consonant burst or fricative noise is raised" (829). The second sub-group "includes those from hissing to hushing articulation, the reverse of those in the first group. The principle used here is palatalisation" (830). In individual languages this takes the following forms:

š - s	Wishram, Sahaptin, Dakota, Coeur d'Alene.
č - c	Wiyot (AUG→DIM), Wishram, Sahaptin, Hupa
č - t	Cocopa
W - s	Hupa
ṣ - s	Luiseño
s,š - ś	Nootka[17]
s - š	Wiyot, Sahaptin
t - č	Yurok, Cree
θ - č	Karok
s - č	Southern Sierra Miwok
ṛ - r	Diegeño
λ - c	Lower Chinook
x - š	Dakota
k - k' q - k'	Tillamook
q - k	Wishram, Sahaptin, Tillamook
k' - k	Hupa
k - q	Nez Perce

(Nichols 1971:829)



1. Nootka, 2. Salish Languages, 3. Nez Perce, 4. Sahaptin, 5. Lower Chinook, 6. Coos, 7. Cree, 8. Ojibwa, 9. Northern Paiute, 10. Yuman Languages, 11. Upper Chinook, 12. Klamath, 13. Yurok, 14. Wiyot, 15. Karok, 16. Yana, 17. Miwok, 18. Luiseño, 19. Diegeño, 20. Yokuts, 21. Dakota, 22. Delaware

(based on Sherzer 1976)

The common factor in all these shifts is the achievement of higher tonality, through palatalisation or consonant-frequency raising to express a diminutive. The last two examples, however, seem to have reversed this process. Nichols attributes this to borrowing (831). The last class, category c, involves several degrees of diminutiveness: t → l → r → n → ð. Most shifts only move one degree up this scale.

Yana and Luiseño use two degrees: l → n and r → ð respectively (831).

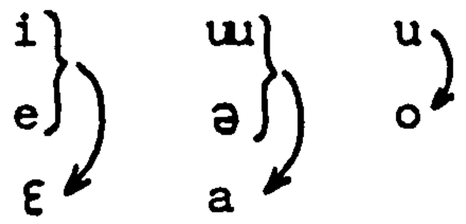
Sahaptin and Nez Perce reverse their shift to n → l:

l - r	Yurok, Wiyot
r - n	Karok (also v - m)
l - n	Yana
r - ð	Luiseno
ɬ - l; ɬ'-l'	Diegueno
n - l	Sahaptin, Nez Perce

(Nichols, 831)

Pentland (1975:248) investigates the situation in Algonquian, a language-family where consonant symbolism is less common than West of the Rockies.[18] He reduces the consonant changes used in these languages to one rule, changing an "underlying" */t/ and */s/ to / č/ and /š/. Examples of these shifts in various forms are found in Cree, Montagnais, Delaware, Micmac, Narragansett, Shawnee, Ojibwa, Potawatomi and Fox (in descending order of certainty).

A different kind of sound-symbolism is used in Korean, where vowel-changes are used to express diminutive. All these changes involve a shift to the most open vowel in the series:



A more detailed analysis of this system and its implications can be found in Chapter 5. A number of African languages use forms of modification with a diminutive sense. In Southern Bantu, for example, a shift from bilabial to palatal is used in conjunction with either prefixation or suffixation or both in their diminutive systems.[19] These may in fact originate in assimilation phenomena related to the initial palatal of the suffix and Ohala (1978) argues very convincingly for this hypothesis. However, this will be treated in the sections on Southern Bantu in Appendix A.

4.6.1 West Africa

One group of languages which deserve special attention are the West-African languages studied by Westermann (1937). These use a variety of often parallel processes to express a diminutive sense. We have already seen some examples of reduplication in section 4.5, but in addition various types of modification are used.

The languages involved are Ewe, Twi, Gã, Guang, Nupe and Temne.

All are members of the Western branch of the so-called Sudanic group. These languages use what Westermann (1937:159) calls "sound-pictures" ('Lautbilder'), which he defines as follows:

> "Ein Lautbild ist ein Wort, das im Empfinden der Sprachgemeinschaft eine lautliche Reaktion auf einem inneren Gefühl einem unmittelbaren, lautlich wie sprachmelodisch angemessenen Ausdruck gibt."

By varying a number of linguistic parameters, a large variety of emotional and semantic effects can be expressed by one of these words. The parameters used are:

- reduplication (discussed in section 4.5)
- vowel-quality
- vowel-quantity
- pitch (these are tone-languages)
- tenseness of consonant
- degree of fortisness of consonant

(162)

By using one or more of these devices a range of meanings can be expressed in "sound-pictures"; these can be reduced to the following dichotomies:

A	B
Intensiv	Extensiv

Der Laut

kurzer Vokal	langer Vokal
flacher heller Vokal	runder dunkler Vokal
hoher Ton	tiefer Ton
stimmloser "harter" Konsonant	stimmhafter "weicher" Konsonant
reduplizierte Wortform	einfache Wortform

Der Sinn

klein, wenig	gross, viel
spitz, fein, zart	stumpf, abgestumpft
dünn, lang, gestreckt	massig, dick, plump, gedunsen
flach, offen	bauchig, hohl, rund, tief
eng, schmal, gedrängt	lose, locker
hart, fest, steif, stark	weich, schleimig, feucht, schwach
leicht, rasch	schwer, langsam
intensive Farbe, Glanz, hell	trübe, dunkel, stumpfe Farbe
etc.	etc.

(210)

We would expect diminutives to be expressed by means of the parameter-values of class A and augmentatives by means of B, and this is generally how it works, e.g.:

Twi:: kakrá (high tone, short vowel) 'klein'
kakraa (low tone, long vowel) 'gross' (164)

Nupe.: rwɔbwɔ ("dark" vowel) 'dick' (167)

and many of the words for 'large' are also in this "dark" vowel category.

Ewe.: kítsikitsi, tyíkityiki 'klein, eng aneinander' (172)

These examples use high front vowels ('flach', 'hell'), high tone and reduplication.

Nupe: fígĭ, fígifigĭ, fida, fírifirigĭ, fírigifirigĭ, fifigi, firifiri 'klein, schmal' (of an opening)
pitigi 'klein'

(172)

Here again there is a combination of high front vowels, high tone in some cases, reduplication, voiceless consonants, etc. In Ewe, most sound-pictures have a low-tone and a high-tone form. The first refers to large, the second to small objects. However, each has a basic form, which has either a low or a high tone, depending on the size category it would normally belong to (cf. Bantu prefix classes).

One qualification is that nearly all low tone forms can be given a high tone, whereas there are a number of highly specialised high-tone words, which do not have a low-tone counterpart, thus:

Ewe: kítsikitsi only has a high-tone form (194).

Examples of 'Lautbilder' with low tone are:

Ewe:	gbagbagba	'gross'
	keke	'breit sein'
Gã.:	kple	'gross'
	kpetenkple	
	agbo	
	para	'breit'
	vuga	
	kpaba	
	haga	

(195)

Examples with high tone:

Twi.:	wese wese	'in kleinen Stücken'
Nupe:	fí	'klein'
	fífi	
	fírifiri	
	dégi	
	fíagi	

ffanyi
gíka
láŋgi
} 'wenig'

The various changes in consonant quality are described on p.201:

> "In bezug auf die Druckstärke gibt es zwei Konsonantengruppen: solche mit starkem Druck, Fortes - oder stimmlose Laute. Die Forteslaute werden mit grösserer Muskelspannung gesprochen, sind straffer, schärfer, intensiver und bezeichnen deshalb Hartes und Kleines, die Leneslaute sind weicher, massiger, und bezeichnen Weiches und Grosses." e.g.

Ewe-G :	kpótokpoto	'Klang kleiner Kindertrommel'
	gbudugbudu	'Klang grosser Trommel'
	tyɔŋkutyɔŋku	'voller Dornen'
	tyɔ́ŋkutyɔŋku	'dasselbe von Kleinem' (high tone)
	dyɔŋgudyɔŋgu	'dasselbe von Grossem'

(202)

In the last example, three degrees of size are achieved by varying tone and consonant-quality. Westermann explains at the end of his paper that not every sound-picture conforms to the system just described. It is not always clear which of the many qualities of a particular object was considered relevant at the time when the 'Lautbild' was originally created. The present system is based on correlations the author recognised, but these may not always be the same in the minds of the speakers who use the various processes productively. (Westermann, pp.210-11).

4.7 Subtraction

The last kind of modification to be considered is subtraction. Cases of this in relation to Romance were touched upon in 4.3. It is in fact quite a common phenomenon. When confronted with an unacceptable sound-sequence, languages either add something,

e.g. the "infixes" in Romance. Alternatively, they can subtract something: e.g.: in English,

river --- rivulet

or in Romanian:

gură --- guriţă 'mouth + dim'

pasăre --- păsărică 'bird + dim'

Catalan:

taula --- tauleta 'table + dim'

Sorb: žaba --- žabka 'frog + dim'

However, subtraction is much more commonly used for hypocoristics:[20]

German: Friedrich --- Fritz[21]

Heinrich --- Heinz[22]

Johan(nes) --- Hans

Subtraction can work either from the back as in Heinz or from the front as in Hans. In Liz, below, it works from both sides.

Yiddish: dovid --- dov-če (+ suffix)

šmarje --- šmer-l (+vowel change + suffix)

English: Stephanie --- Steph

Elizabeth --- Liz

James --- Jim (+ vowel change)

Philip --- Phil

Icelandic: djöfull --- djöfsi 'devil' (Bronke, 1954:32)

Sigurður --- Siggi (Grönke:45)

Baldur --- Baldi

Amerikani --- kani 'American' (as above)

Dutch: Hendrik --- Henk (subtraction + K)

Franciscus -- Frank

Frans

Spanish: Pilar --- Pili (subtraction + /i/)

Subtraction processes are sometimes used for familiar objects as in the following example from West-Frisian:

gymnastykskuon --- gimkes 'gym-boots'

There are in our data no examples of proper diminutives being expressed by means of subtraction only.

Footnotes

1. It will be shown in 4.4 that Bantu prefixation is in fact different from any of the other processes studied.

2. Strictly speaking these are not infixes as they do not break up the root. They are additional suffixes, which cannot occur without the normal diminutive suffix.

3. Attempts to take cas as the root, as has been suggested in the case of fill (+ gender-marker = filla(f)), are futile in the case of casa as it forms a minimal pair with unrelated caso 'case'.

4. cf. Ettinger (1972, 1974); Weiser (1979) and Appendix A sections on Spanish, Portuguese and Italian.

5. The situation for Afrikaans is very similar and will therefore not be discussed at this point. I refer however to Appendix A.

6. Because the suffix ends in a vowel, the second suffix always takes the form -tjie.

7. On the implications of these forms for the transformational model cf. Schultink (1974).

8. In Portugal this is only possible with the adjective pequeno: pequen-it-it-o.

9. Here too we could analyse kiji- as a separate prefix.

10. It can be used with abstract meaning in the singular.

11. Formations of this type occur of course in many European and probably non-European languages.

12. For the relationship between palatals and palato-alveolars and diminutive I refer to Chapter 5.

13. Reference should be made to the Basque section of Appendix A for a full description of this system.

14. This study does include Dakota, which is East of the Rockies.

15. The symbols used are those of Nichols, their IPA equivalent is often difficult to ascertain.

16. Nichols is not sure about this language as she has to rely on an unclear secondary source.

17. This shift actually expands the phonological system of Nootka, as it only occurs here; the diminutive does form a minimal pair with its non-diminutive counterpart, though, so it has to be included despite its limited distribution.

18. Wyot and Yurok, west of the Rocky Mountains are related to Algonquian; cf. Haas (1970).

19. cf. Ohala (1978); Louw (1976).

20. Substitution is also quite commonly used for hypocoristics, e.g.: Robert -- Bob, Richard -- Dick, or Spanish: Francisco -- Paco, Pablo -- Sancho, Jesus -- Chucho, Josefa -- Pepa (-- Pepita), etc.

21. Grimm (1831:691/2) traces this -Z back to OHG and MHG -zo, e.g.: Ruodolf or Ruoderih - Ruozo, Teupaldus - Teuzo, etc. The Saxon equivalent uses a -t as in Sigibert - Sitto. This suffix is still reflected in modern Low German and Frisian names like Sicco, and perhaps even in English forms in -o: "Red Robbo", boyo, etc. (see English section Appendix A).

22. To this can then be added a normal diminutive suffix: Heinzchen, Heinzel, etc.

5. Sound Symbolism

5.1 Introduction

Jespersen (1922)[1] states:

> "Sound symbolism plays a greater role in the development of languages than is admitted by most linguists."

Linguists had considered the idea of an inherent psychological relationship between certain sounds and certain areas of meaning long before Jespersen. Nevertheless this article, however concise, seems to be the first attempt to link the notion of 'smallness' - one of the major concepts in the semantics of the diminutive - with high front vowels, especially [i] and [ɪ].[2] Similarly back vowels, especially /u, o, ɔ, ɑ/ are associated with largeness. He is realistic enough, though, to state:

> "I do not mean to say that the vowel [i] always implies smallness, or that smallness is everywhere indicated by means of that vowel; no language is consistent in that way, ..." (285).

He mentions the examples of big and small to illustrate this point. From his examples a tendency to follow this general pattern certainly emerges. After an introduction in which he gives some anecdotal evidence of children and "savages" using the sounds in this symbolic manner, he lists examples that support his theory, but not before pointing out that he firmly believes that on the whole the tendency in the history of languages is towards keeping those words which conform to the theory and dropping those which do not (186/7).

First he lists the words for 'little' and he includes such obvious examples, as: tiny, wee, teeny-weeny, as well as: slim, spindly, piddling, piffling, and other words for 'unimportant', e.g. trivial, flimsy, wishy-washy, weedy, etc. (286/7). He gives some examples from other languages as well, e.g. terms for 'small' or 'little':

lille (Dan.), piri (Norn), micidus (Lat.), piccino, piccin (It.), petit; chico (Sp.), xic (Cat.), mic (Rom.), mikrŏs (Gr. compare makrŏs 'long'), mikirsoq (Grld.Eskimo), tiisai (Jap.), etc. The next list is of words for 'child' or 'young animal', e.g. child, kid, chick, kitten, imp, nipper, piccaninny (from Sp. pequeñino),[3] midget, tick, nit, shrimp, mite, pixy, also in other languages: filius, hijo (Sp.), fils, fille , niño, chico, etc. (288/9).

The final word-list is that of "Words for small things" (291ff). These are words referring to anything small, any small amount, etc.: bit, whit, piece, splinter, twig, snip, snippet, chip, smithereens,[4] drizzle, slit, pin, tip, etc. Also: titivillicium 'very small thing', mică 'moment' (Rom.), pico 'a bit' (Por.), stip 'point, dot' (Du.), etc. More evidence to support the theory comes from diminutive suffixes (294-99). Jespersen lists the most common suffixes in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, -y, -ie in English, Swiss German, Afrikaans; -i in Hungarian, Gothic -īn, Greek -in-, Anglo-Irish -een, English -kin, -ling, Old English -incel, as in husincel 'little house', etc. He does concede that French -et, ette, and Italian -etto, etta, "... has lost the phonetic i-symbolism ..." (295). Could this be considered a counter-example to his theory that languages prefer to keep diminutives with [i]? Under the heading "Other Notions", Jespersen discusses certain verbs and adjectives that have connotations of smallness, such as: mince, shrink, shrivel, dwindle, quick, glib, vivid, nippy. And words for 'quick' in other languages: kvik(Dan.), livlig (Dan.), vite, vif, rapide; kirikiri (Jap.). However these words seem to be getting further and further removed from diminutives proper. He does return to the notion of smallness in the last section, where he claims that the inherent diminutive connotations of " i ",

"... have influenced the semantic and phonetic development of some words" (301). As examples he gives among others miniature, which originally meant 'an image painted with minium (vermilion)'. He also suggests that the symbolic value caused the development of the vowel in little (lytel (OE) luttil (OSax)). In some cases the vowel can be changed to /i/ for special, more emphatic, effect, e.g. leetle (302).

5.2 Sapir

Although the issue of vowel symbolism has never been one of the most popular in linguistics, the argument did not stop with Jespersen's article. In 1929 Edward Sapir published a paper in which he returned to the question of sound symbolism, but this time supplying a certain amount of experimental evidence. Sapir picks up the same point Jespersen discusses:

> "... the emphatically diminutive ee of teeny as contrasted with the normal i of tiny ... the phonetic difference is undoubtedly felt as somehow directly expressive of the difference of meaning in a sense in which the contrast between say 'boy' and 'man' is not." (226)

To find out if there is any psychological basis to this sound-symbolism, Sapir devised three different experiments. In the first of these, the informants were presented with lists of 60 word pairs, 30 known existing words of English and 30 unfamiliar words. Each of these lists involved one vowel contrast. For the list of /ɑ/ -- /i/, a typical subject decided that for 81% of the pairs /ɑ/ referred to something large rather than something small. In the case of /ɑ/ -- /e/, the scores were 83% for the first (known) thirty word-pairs and 73% for the second (unknown) series. Sapir concludes, therefore that with most people there is "a definite symbolic feeling-significance that seemed to have

little relation to the associative values of actual words", that the actual "phonetic context" of the contrasted vowels made little difference and that the symbolic distinction varied with the nature of the vowels contrasted (228).

The possibility remained, however, that once the informant decided that one vowel was large and the other one small he would make his subsequent judgements accordingly. To avoid this possibility a second experiment was devised. For the second experiment, 500 informants were used, mostly high school pupils, some students, some adult non-students and 7 Chinese. Again the words were presented in pairs. The subjects were asked to decide, whether the first member of each pair was the larger or the smaller reference and to tick one of two columns accordingly. If the response was neutral, no mark was to be placed. The vowels considered were first of all /ɑ a ɛ e i/ and the way each of them related to all the others. The second set was /ɑ ɔ o u/ to test the significance of lip-rounding. The third set contrasted /u o ɔ / with /i ė ɛ a/. The fourth and fifth sets dealt with consonants, contrasting them according to voice-voiceless and stop-fricative. Most interesting for us is the way in which the informants responded to the high front vowels as opposed to back vowels, and here Sapir concludes that:

> "English-speaking society does, for some reason or other feel that of these two vowels, ɑ, by and large, is possessed of a greater potential magnitude symbolism than the contrasted vowel i. The same feeling seems to be illustrated by the small number of Chinese cases" (231).

It was also found that the semantic relationships run very closely parallel to the phonological relationships.[5] Sapir gives as one possible explanation for these phenomena the tongue position, which for high front vowels allows a smaller volume of air to resonate than for back vowels (235).

The third experiment was designed to elicit possible idiosyncratic behaviour of informants in response to the test-phonemes. An artificial word was given an arbitrary meaning, whereupon one by one phonemes were changed and the informant was asked about the resulting change in meaning. No suggestion of size had been given, but size-related responses were still given, e.g.:

> mīla 'brook' -- mila 'smaller brook' -- mēla 'larger brook' -- mɛ̄la 'large lake' -- mɛla 'little lake' .... -- mɔ̄la 'ocean at night', etc. (236/7).

Sapir seemed quite convinced about the innate psychological reality of this type of sound symbolism and he concluded his paper as follows:

> "... it is believed that the experiments here referred to give cumulative evidence for the belief that unsocialised symbolisms tend to work themselves out rather definitely, and that the influence of specific, functional language factors need not be invoked to explain these symbolisms" (239).

5.3 Chastaing (1964)

A few other studies appeared in the next few decades. And in 1964, more than 30 years later one answer to Sapir's study appeared in the shape of Maxime Chastaing's 'Nouvelles recherches sur le symbolisme des voyelles'.

His main criticism of the work of Sapir and others[6] was their reliance on made-up words. He wanted to test the same phenomena in natural languages. For this he studied the vocabularies of French and English. He investigated 'brightness' - 'darkness', but also size. For English he found evidence for symbolism in the 'bright' - 'dark' vocabulary. For large-small he moved to French and found that for smallness ('petitesse'), 98% of words used front vowels and 2% back vowels; for largeness ('grandeur')

12% had front vowels and 88% back vowels and he therefore concluded that: "Le symbolisme paraît indubitable" (80). Consultations of more dictionaries show similar results, although the percentages vary and 100% is never achieved, but Chastaing feels confident enough to state that:

> "..., ces pourcentages prouvent, invariablement, l'association des voyelles aigues à la petitesse et des voyelles graves à la grandeur" (82)

The very adjectives petit and grand illustrate this fact.

For English the case is slightly less convincing. Back vowels are normally used in the formation of 20% of all 'small' words, but more than 50% of 'big' words. /i, I/ are used in more than 35% of words referring to smallness and less than 20% for words of largeness (82/3). Finally Chastaing has a superficial look at German, which he finds less satisfactory. He does find a correlation between high third formants and smallness (85).

His final conclusion is more careful:

> "Reste ... à reconnaître que les correspondances expérimentalement établies entre les signifiants et les signifiés influent sur les langues parlées. Cette influence, nos tableaux attestent qu'elle varie avec les langues: les hommes 1. utilisent plus ou moins des matériaux symboliques, et 2. combinent différemment ceux-ci quand ils construisent leur langage quotidien." (86)

5.4 Fischer-Jørgensen

Fischer-Jørgensen also developed an interest in the problem of phonetic symbolism. Some initial conclusions are published in a paper called 'Perceptual dimensions of vowels' (1967). The author starts off this paper by stressing the importance of describing speech sounds in perceptual terms and proposes that it is here that we may find the explanation of sound-symbolism (667).

Jakobson (1942)[7] recognised a close relationship between the perceptual dimensions of sounds and of colours. The front-back axis should then be perceived as 'bright'-'dark'.

She extends this to other similar pairs: 'pointed'-'blunt', 'hard'-'soft', 'light'-'heavy', 'thin'-'thick'. When put along a scale of degrees of the quality in question all showed the average order /i y ɛ-œ ɔ - u/ (669). A second, similar factor is represented by 'narrow'-'broad', 'small'-'big', 'tense'-'lax' and 'close'-'open'. Here the order is /i y u-ɛ -œ ɔ/ (hyphens indicate a group of "equivalent" sounds). These findings, which again show 'smallness' linked with high front vowels and 'largeness' with back vowels were the result of experiments carried out in three stages between 1949 and 1965, using students as informants. Only in the last experiments (1964-65) was the pair 'small'-'big' included. The informants were asked to place a series of twelve vowels, spoken on tape, on a scale from 'small' to 'big'. At the time of publication of this paper, several experiments were still in progress and no reliable results were known yet. However, Fischer-Jørgensen published a second paper on the subject of sound-symbolism in 1978. She starts off this article by quoting Bertil Malmberg, who states that.

> "l'arbitraire du signe is never absolute in a language; there will always be layers of vocabulary, representing a more primitive stage of the language, in which the relation between sound and meaning is partly motivated" (80).

Most of this paper involves an experiment based on an article by D. Westermann, published in 1937, which discusses sound and meaning in a number of related West-African languages.[8] In these languages, certain vowel-classes are linked with certain meaning classes and it is this correlation which Fischer-Jørgensen sets

out to test on Danish students. The pair 'small'-'big' were not included, but some related pairs were: 'thin'-'thick', 'flat'-'round', 'hard'-'soft', 'tight'-'loose', 'weak'-'strong', 'light'-'heavy', 'quick'-'slow', 'agile'-'clumsy', 'bright'-'dark'. The results were presented in a diagram:

(Fischer-Jørgensen, 1978:83)

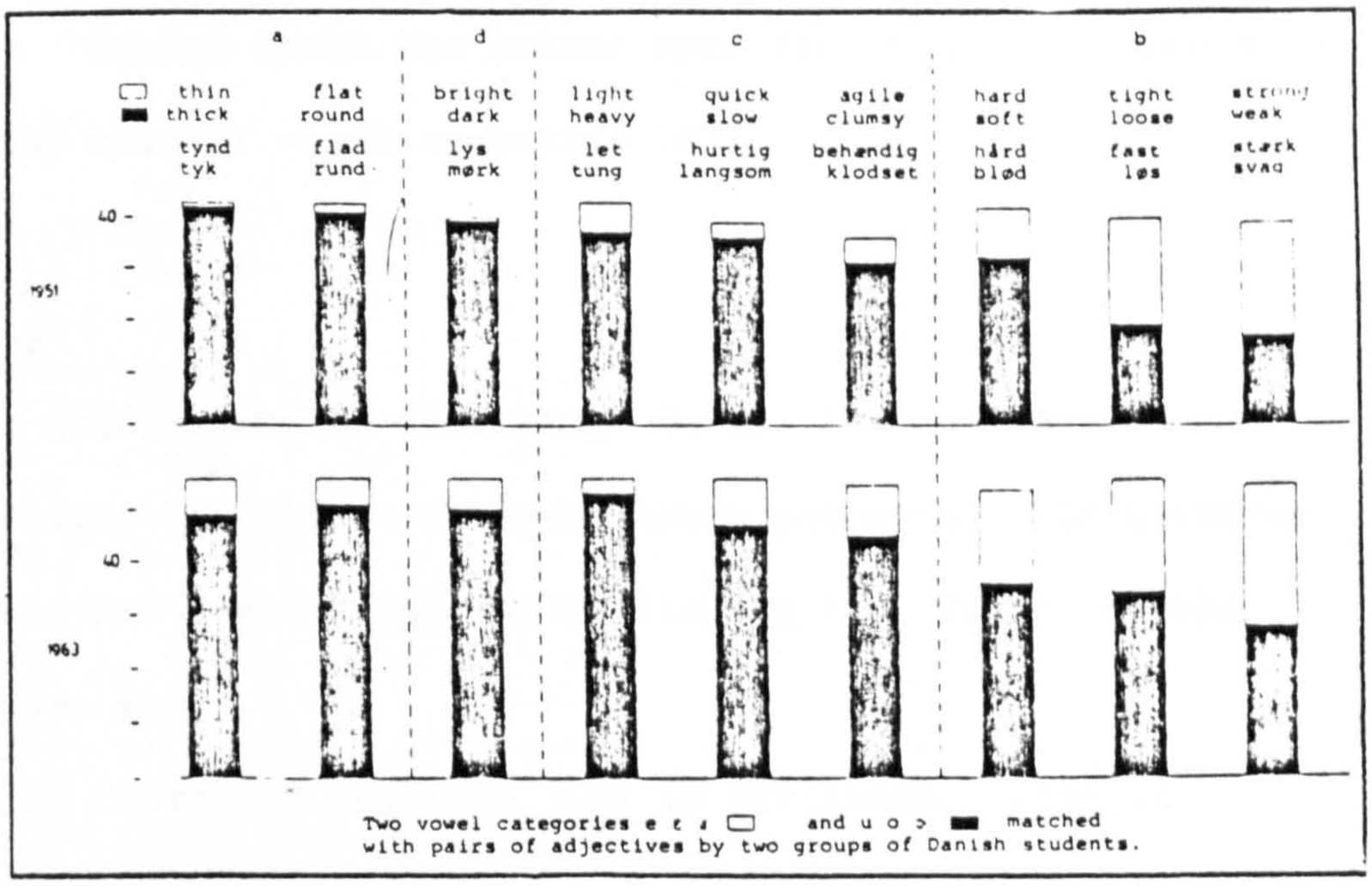


Fig. 5.1

In the diagram the columns are ordered from left to right, according to the degree of agreement with the W. Africans.

The author dismisses the fact that the quality of the Danish vowels may have influenced the results (83). The results show a remarkable degree of agreement between the Danish response and the W. African system. This leads Fischer-Jørgensen to extend the generalisation a bit further:

> "The almost complete agreement between the value of vowels in expressive West-African words and the results of tests with Danish subjects shows clearly that these values are not dependent on specific languages or cultures. Moreover, experiments with speakers of other languages reported in the literature, support the hypothesis of almost universal values." (84)

Although usually the front-back difference is the one that is considered most important, Westermann took the rounded-unrounded opposition as being decisive for the languages he studied.[9] But Fischer-Jørgensen (1967) found that "Danish subjects considered [i, y] and [u] to be the most tight and compact of all vowels"; this would suggest that the open-close parameter also has some significance. On the whole the author opts for "auditory impression" as being at the root of vowel symbolism (87).

5.5 More Data

It is perhaps interesting at this stage to see how our data on diminutives relate to this vowel symbolism hypothesis. In Germanic those suffixes that support the theory linking high front vowels with diminutives are:

-ie/-y, in Scots and English; -ie in Afrikaans; -ing in Some German dialects; -li/-i in Swiss German; -kin, -ling in English, Icelandic etc.; -i in Icelandic hypocoristics. In the Celtic languages, Irish (Gaelic) -ín and Breton -ig/-ik conform to the theory. In Romance, -ino, inho and -ito in Portuguese support the theory, as do -ito, -ico, -illo, -ín/ina in Spanish; the semi-productive -í/-ina, -olí in Catalan; -inu in Gascon, -ihoun in Provençal, -inu in Franco-Provençal; -ittu, -in, -inu and -li (from Swiss German) in the Rhaeto-Romance dialects; -it, -ino in Northern Italy; -iddu, -iteddu, -ittu, -iceddu in Sicily and -icellu in Sard; -iche, -ille in French dialects; -ică, -iţă, -işor, -ioară/ -ior, -uică, -uliţă in Romanian, etc. In Basque some of the many diminutive suffixes have high front vowels: -ñi, -skil, -tila, -txi, -xkila. For Slavic, the Sorb diminutive

intensifier -cy(c)- supports the theory, as do some of the suffixes derived from it: -ik/-ick, etc. Similarly, the Czech diminutive intensifier -ič- and the suffix -ík, which is related to it. Also the rarer suffixes -ínek, -inka. In Ancient Greek, the suffixes -ικο and -ιον also support the thesis, as do the Hungarian diminutive suffix -i and the diminutive intensifier -i-, as well as the system in Hungarian whereby the main vowel of the stem changes to <i> to express diminutive value.

When we consider Amerindian languages, we can again find support for the theory, albeit not as much as on this side of the Atlantic. Examples of support for the theory come from diminutive affixes, e.g.: -tsin(-λi) in Nahuatl (= Aztec). Other examples are rare in our data. In some Bantu languages diminutives are put into the KI-class (7th prefix) of nouns. This provides support for the hypothesis. This support is also borne out by the use of the vi-prefix and the -ji- form used for diminutives in Swahili. More evidence to support the vowel-symbolism under consideration comes from words for 'small'. In addition to the Germanic and Romance words listed by Jespersen (1933), there is beag in Scottish Gaelic (vowel somewhere between /I/ and /ɛ/, but closer to the former), bihan in Breton. In Bahasa Indonesia there is kecil. Like Jespersen, we could add to this words for children, young animals, small objects, small amounts, etc. Examples of these are Quechua pisi 'a little'; in Bahasa Indonesia picis 'a 10 cent coin', sedikit 'a little, small amount', adik 'little brother/ sister', etc. And Jespersen has already listed a lot of European examples.

5.6 Counter Examples

However, there are quite a lot of counter-examples and one paper by Kong-On Kim (1977) uses Korean to attack the vowel-symbolism theory as outlined above. In Korean a form of sound symbolism operates, but the sound-meaning correlation is not as we would expect:

> /piŋkɯl/ '(turn) round and round'
> v
> /pɛŋkɯl/ as above, but the circle involved is smaller and the movement faster.
>
> (Kim 1977:67)[10]

This system prompts Kim to state:

> "... the correlation between the phoneme alternation and the resulting connotation shift in Korean is different from those observed in other languages, thus invalidating any claim that such a correlation is universal" (67-68).

To be perfectly fair to his opposition, I do not think that anyone has actually claimed 100% universality for the hypothesis. Nevertheless, the Korean example is a counter-example to the theory.

The actual vowel-shifts used in the Korean diminutive system are as follows:

/i/, /e/ ⟶ /ɛ/

/ɯ/, /ə/ ⟶ /a/

/u/ ⟶ /o/

> "... the words containing one of the three vowels /ɛ/, /a/ and /o/ in the first syllable are associated with a diminutive connotation such as being light, bright, affectionate etc.; all of which are derivable from smallness in size"(68).

So the axis along which the Korean vowels move to express diminutive[11] is not front-back, but high-low. The three vowels involved form the lowest vowels (most open) in the Korean vowel system:

Korean Vowel Shifts:

Probably as a result of this phenomenon, Korean subjects associate /a/ with smallness and /i/ with largeness.[12] This would suggest that these sound associations are, in fact, language specific.

Korean is not the only language that does not support the vowel-symbolism theory. Another counter-example is Ngiyambaa, an Australian Aboriginal language of Western New South Wales. In the description of this language by Donaldson (1980), the diminutive and augmentative suffixes are given as follows:

	singular	plural
diminutive	-DHul	-galga:N-
'immature'	-ga:	-galga:N-
augmentative	-bidi (T)	-gala:n
	-giran (K)	

(Donaldson, 1980:99; "T" and "K" refer to two different dialects)

In other words, the diminutives use back vowels and the augmentatives use high front vowels.[13] Only the augmentative plural also uses low back vowels. Some form of symbolism does seem to operate, though, for the tendency extends to other words involving differences in size;

bubay 'small'

babir 'large'

dhalaŋay 'fresh, new, young'

marayibiyaN- 'old'

(101)

Tibetan is another example of a language which consistently uses back vowels to express diminutive force. In this case the high back, rounded vowel /u/ is used as in the -bu suffix and its alternative forms -gu, -ṅu, -nu, -ru, -lu, -u and -'u, as discussed by Uray (1952).[14] (See also Appendix A and 3.11.8).

We do not even have to go this far to find counter-examples to the theory that links diminutive with high front vowels.

In many European languages there are examples of diminutive suffixes with back vowels. For example: -ag in Gaelic and Caithness Scots (these vowels are often reduced to /ə/; the non-productive -ock suffix in English; -óg in Irish; -ang and -la in German dialects; -on/-oun in French and Occitan; -ot in French; -uco in Northern Spain; -ut(e) in Friulan, -ucce in Calabria, -uzzu in Sicilian; -ka, -ko in Slavic, -us in Hungarian, -uleţ, -uliţă, -uţ/-uţă in Romanian and so on. In addition there are a lot of suffixes with /ə/, as in Dutch -(t)je and Dutch and Low German -ke(n), as well as German -chen, -le, etc. English -let could also be mentioned in this context. Perhaps the high-front-vowel-for-diminutive theory needs to be qualified somewhat to take account of the many counter-examples. They do seem to be on the right track; a large number of diminutive systems do use high front vowels, but why limit the theory to vowels? (cf. 5.8)

5.7 Ultan (1978)

The most comprehensive analysis of these symbolic phenomena is without any doubt Ultan (1978). He is also the first to consider both vowels and consonants - along with various other symbolic processes - within the same system. Ultan (1978:527) mentions

the equivalence of "high and/or front vowels" and "palatal or fronted consonants" as typical of diminutives. In his data, however, (535-544) examples of palatal or fronted consonants involved in expressing diminutives are largely confined to the Amerindian languages in his sample. Compared to the data in Appendix A of this thesis, this seems to give a rather incomplete picture. From our - admittedly more limited and more "eurocentric" - data this phenomenon emerges far more clearly. One difference may be that Ultan looks specifically at symbolic processes, while the present study tends to consider in a more general way the presence of a certain type of sound in a diminutive form, which does not occur in its non-diminutive counterpart. This still does not explain why Ultan (1978:535) includes a Basque suffix, but ignores altogether the very productive consonantal symbolism in Basque (see relevant section Appendix A). Ultan (555-6) does cover diminutive affixes in a short appendix. I include these in the total count. He concludes that as far as proper symbolic processes are concerned, any evidence for a universal link between the diminutive concept with a particular sound or group of sounds is inconclusive.

5.8 Palatal and Palato-Alveolar Consonants

As Ultan (1978:527) suggested,one feature that is remarkably widespread is the tendency for diminutives to use palatal and palato-alveolar consonants. Even a superficial look at our data will reveal a surprisingly large number of diminutive suffixes incorporating such a consonant. From Dutch -(t)je, Frisian -kje, -(t)sje and German -chen to Spanish -illo and Portuguese -inho. In Eastern Europe we have the diminutive intensifiers -eč-/-ic- etc. and

Romanian -işor. Turkish has the -çik diminutive suffix. In the Americas, Quechua has the two suffixes -cha and -lla; Tlingit uses the suffix /-'c°/. In many Amerindian languages that use diminutive consonant symbolism this involves a shift of the consonant to a palatal, especially in the Algonquian languages (see 4.6), and in Wiyot and Yurok, two Californian languages.[16]

In Africa, Louw (1976) and Ohala (1978) report on palatalisation of bilabials in Southern Bantu. In Sotho, Venda, Nguni, Xhosa and Tsonga this is used to express diminutives (see Appendix A for examples).

The masculine diminutive suffixes of Tigrē also feature palatals: -āy, -tāy, -ētāy (used for hypocoristics); as do other Semitic languages most of which use y in some form to express diminutive.

In Basque palatalisation is very closely linked with diminutives. Not only do most diminutive suffixes incorporate palatals, but Basque also uses a form of diminutive consonant symbolism involving palatalisation to express diminution.

This still leaves us with many examples that are not covered, such as the European suffixes with /n l t d/ etc. One property these consonants have in common is that like palatals and palato-alveolars they too involve a tongue-position somewhere in the front half of the mouth; very similar in fact to high front vowels. Some link between consonants and vowels is generally accepted by traditional phonological theory. Albeit that, due to the traditionally different systems used for the description of vowels and consonants, one tends to forget how and that they interrelate. A few people have recognised this problem, among them Chomsky

& Halle (1968), who assign to palatal and velar consonants the feature specification [+ high] and in addition to velars the feature [+ back], normally used in the description of vowels only. A more comprehensive system which deals with consonants and vowels within the same framework of description has been proposed in various articles resulting from work carried out at Lund University principally by Lindau and Wood. Wood (1979) proposes the following four places of articulation for vowels, based on research carried out at Lund:

(1) along the hard palate /i-ɛ,y-ø/ etc.

(2) along the soft palate /u-ʊ, ɨ/ etc.

(3) in the upper pharynx /o-ɔ,ɣ / etc.

(4) in the lower pharynx /ɑ,a-æ/ etc.

Wood concludes from his experiments with informants from a great variety of linguistic backgrounds, that these categories must .be universal (31). I would suggest that it is category (1) where most of the diminutives select their sounds; both consonants and vowels.

Lass (1984:110) suggests the possibility of taking vowel height and consonant stricture as values of the same parameter. He sets out the following 6 degrees of stricture as an example (Chapter 6:16):

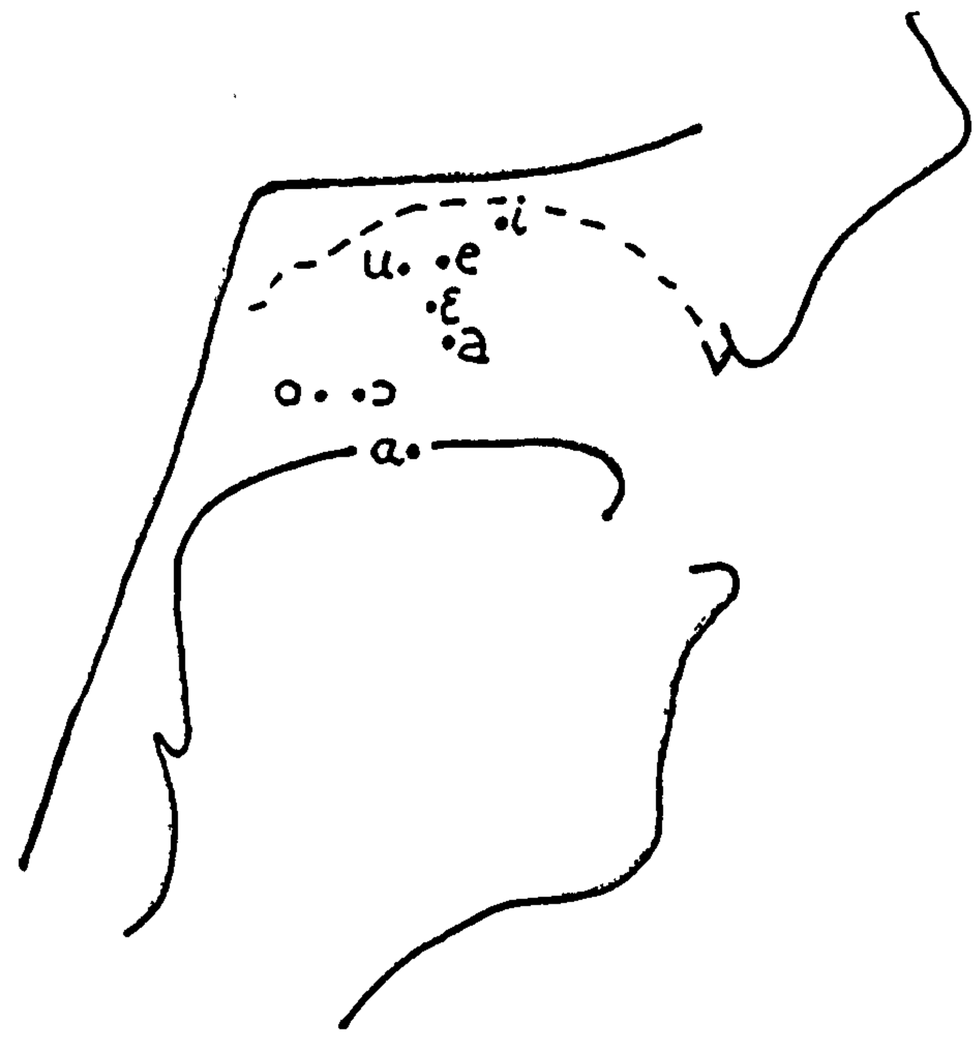
Fig.5.2

Palatal		Palato-Velar		Velar				
6	ʄ	6	ǵ	6	g			
5	j	5	ɣ̟	5	ɣ			
4	i	4	ɨ̟	4	u			
3	e	3	ɘ̟	3	o	ɔ	ɢ	G Uvular
2	ɛ	2	ɜ̟			4	5	6
1	a	1	ɐ̟			ɑ	ʕ	Pharyngeal
	2		3			4	5	

Lass defends this departure from the traditional arrangement thus:

> "The usual display of the 'vowel space' - and the auditory judgements we make (or are trained to make) about it - often do not respond to articulation. The standard characterization of vowel height, for instance, rests on a notional location of 'maximum stricture' or 'highest point of the tongue' at some place on the front/back axis: and the well known (and indispensable) system of Cardinal Vowels is in fact based on the idea of 'auditorily equidistant' vowel qualities being mapped onto (supposedly) physically equidistant points in articulatory space." (6.6)

He illustrates this with an X-ray of the actual locations of maximal strictures.



(Lass 1984:6.32)

Fig. 5.3

Clearly a system that allows us to combine vowels and consonants within the same description has now become essential in tackling the problem of diminutive phonology. Using these ideas I would propose the following criteria for sounds used in diminutive affixes and other methods of expressing diminutive force:

- Tongue tip-blade-body used as active articulator (excludes labials and tongue-root).
- Alveolar and palatal area used as passive articulator (or Wood's feature "along the hard palate")
- Tongue height from close upwards (or above Lass 1984 position 3)

- No liprounding (I have found no examples with /ø , y/ etc.)

Unfortunately <coronal> as defined by Chomsky and Halle (1968:304) does not include palatal consonants and is therefore of no use. Lass (1976:187) introduces the feature [± lingual]. This feature defines dentals, palatals, velars and high vowels as one natural class. The inclusion of just high vowels is ideal for our purposes and is defended by Lass (1976:193) as follows:

> "But should high vowels have some feature in common with a whole class of consonants that other vowels lack? I would say yes: for among the vowels the high ones are unique in that they alone might be said to have 'homorganic' consonants. At least in the specific sense that there are consonants that are more occluded versions of high vowels, like [j ç] in relation to [i], [w] in relation to [u]."

The following specification would then cover most of the sounds in question:

$$\begin{bmatrix} + & \text{lingual} \\ - & \text{dental} \\ - & \text{velar} \\ - & \text{round} \end{bmatrix}$$

Wood's feature [+ hard palate] would not be specific enough, while [- dental], [- velar] and [- round] reduce the material to what we need. This class is perhaps still too broad, as it is clear that some of its members are much more likely to be used in a diminutive system than others. I would suggest, though, that this is the best specification for this material, as it covers little more than the front high vowels and palatal and palato-alveolar consonants, which feature so prominently in our data.

This can be illustrated with some statistics taken from the languages included in Appendix A. High front vowels and consonants (palatal and palato-alveolar) are found in the diminutives of 21/25 Indo-European and 15/29 non-IE languages. This might suggest, of

course, that this kind of symbolism is especially marked in IE languages. To investigate if it was perhaps an aerial feature, the European languages in our data were contrasted with those from outside Europe. The findings then showed that 25/29 European languages used these sounds in their diminutives, while for the non-European group the figure was 12/25. As the majority of the European languages are also IE, perhaps we are dealing with an IE phenomenon. It was therefore decided to consider a few IE languages not included in our data. A random sample of 9 languages representing past and present stages of IE show the following:

language	high front vowels	front consonants	K-type dim.	L-type dim.	other
Armenian	some forms	no	yes		
Bengali	no	no	yes		
Hindi	yes	yes			
Hittite					reduplication
Kurdish	some forms	some forms		yes	
Pashto	no	yes			
Persian	no	some forms	yes		
Tajik	some forms	some forms	yes		
Tokarian	yes	yes	yes	yes	

In other words, 7/9 use high front vowels and/or front consonants to form diminutives. This is well above the average in our data. Our provisional conclusion then has to be that from our sample about half the languages use high front vowels and fronted consonants for diminutive formation; a trend which is much more marked in the Indo-European language family, where up to 80% use these sounds for diminutives.

It is of course possible that these sounds are generally more common in the IE languages than in the rest of the world's languages.

To investigate this, Maddieson (1984) was consulted. He uses the UPSID (UCLA Phonological Segment Inventory Database) sample of 317 languages, 21 of which are Indo-European, 5.6% of the sample. If we then investigate what proportion of the languages that have a certain high front phoneme in their inventory is IE, we find the following:

phoneme	proportion IE/total nr of LL with phoneme	percentage of IE LL/total nr with phoneme
/tʃ/	14/141	10
/tʃ:/	1/5	20
/dʒ/	11/80	13.7
/ʃ/	13/146	8.9
/ʒ/	10/51	19.6
/ɕ/	3/11	27.3
/ɲ/	6/107	5.6
/ʎ/	1/15	6.6
/j/	21/271	7.75
/i/	13/271	4.8
/i:/	8/41	19.5
/I/	9/54	16.6

In addition a number of IE languages feature a number of rarer high front phonemes of various kinds, many of which are only used by one or more IE or Amerindian languages. Out of the 12 "typical" phonemes considered above, only for /ɲ/ do the IE languages present an average score, i.e. the percentage of IE languages with this phoneme is the same as the percentage of IE languages in the total sample. Only /i/ shows a score below average for IE languages, while the remaining 10 show a score consistently above average for the sample. IE languages form a higher proportion of the languages with high front phonemes than they do of the total sample. It would appear then that - on the face of it - these sounds are indeed more common in IE than they are in most other languages.

By leaving out the feature [- velar] in the specification we could even include the very widespread IE K-type diminutive, although this might make the class too broad. Another possibility would be to allow such phenomena as gemination for hypocoristics - at one time very productive in Germanic - some place in the system. It is still possible that further research would show that for certain parts of the world (e.g. Korea, Tibet) we would have to propose an alternative class of sounds most likely to be used by local diminutive systems. This too may require inclusion of back vowels and consonants and thus include Sanskrit -ka- and K-type diminutives in general. Our data are too limited, however, to go into this in any serious way.

5.9 Language Acquisition

Let us now consider child-language to see how it relates to the above. One fact which is often mentioned by diminutivists in the literature is that the language of "the nursery" is exceptionally rich in diminutives. Both the language of children and that used by adults when addressing children[18] are in all languages - even those that use relatively few diminutives like English- diminutivising styles par excellence. It would therefore not be surprising if the actual forms of diminutives and hypocoristics owed a lot to the language of children and to the language spoken to children by adults, which is itself probably strongly influenced by children's language.

To analyse this question I will relate diminutives to the findings concerning child language development as outlined in Jakobson (1971), which is itself based on Jakobson (1941), mentioned previously in this chapter. Jakobson analyses in this paper the development

of phonology in children and claims that there are universal rules governing the order of acquisition of the various phonemes.

As far as the vowels are concerned, the first one that is acquired is what Jakobson writes as A (77); some vowel in the lower pharynx, using Wood's system, so the /a-ɑ/ area. This might be used to explain the presence of these vowels in diminutive and hypocoristic affixes e.g. Sanskrit -ka-, Slavic -ka, Basque -ka and Quechua -ka. This vowel leads to the acquisition of a triangular system of vowels U, A, I, back high rounded, (back) low, front high. This might suggest a possible reason for the frequency not only of /a-ɑ/, but also of back high rounded vowels in diminutives, e.g. -uco, -ucce, -oun in Romance, -ko in Slavic, Quechua hypocoristic diminutive suffix -ku, Hungarian -us, the use of 12th prefix TU- for diminutive plural in South-Western Bantu, etc. Like the unrounded front vowels (including [i, I] the rounded back vowels are considered primary and are therefore acquired first by children (78).[19]

> "... in child language (as well as that of aphasics) at the stage where they make no distinction between the various vowels of the same degree of openness (for example, between U and I) utilizing them as combinatory or stylistic variants or using only one of them." (80)

This points at some sort of natural class in child language which includes all close vowels; something which could explain the frequency of both front and back close vowels in diminutives, but at this stage, this is no more than speculation.

The first consonantal opposition is acquired after the first vocalic opposition and Jakobson supplies little of interest to diminutivists in relation to consonants, however we cannot dismiss out of hand the possibility of the form of diminutives finding their origin in the language of children.

Footnotes

1. I will be referring to this article as reprinted in Jespersen (1933), pp 283-303.

2. From the examples it becomes clear that Jespersen has both of these in mind when he uses "I".

3. In fact it is probably from Portuguese pequenino, rather than Spanish, which would normally use pequeñito, even 300 years ago.

4. According to J. of Scottish origin; OED has "origin unknown". The -een would suggest an Irish origin, however.

5. With the exception of ɑ- e, which Sapir explains as being due to the unfamiliarity of his informants with /e/, as opposed to the realisation of <ai> or <a> in English spelling (233/4).

6. He mentions an experiment carried out by Miron, who presented 50 "nonsense" words to 79 Americans and 41 Japanese. His findings were as follows: "plus ils [the vowels] sont antérieurs (c'est-à-dire: aigus), plus ils symbolisent la faiblesse, la légēreté, la petitesse, la minceur, la rapidité et même la hauteur" (76).

Miron uses Osgood et al.'s "semantic differential" in his evaluation, as introduced in C.E. Osgood, G.J. Suci, P.H. Tannenbaum (1957).

7. She refers to the original version of this work, published in: Språkvetenskapliga Sällskapets i Uppsala Förhandlingar 1940-42, 1942.

8. There is a more detailed discussion of this article in 4.6.1.

9. cf. 5.9.

10. Korean also uses consonant symbolism, but as it does not involve changes in size or related concepts I will not go into that aspect any further.

11. Several other connotations may be present; higher speed, short movements, affection, etc.

12. Reported in Taylor & Taylor (1962).

13. Chastaing (1964), though, does allow for this in his conclusion, when he states that the universal symbolism may be used in different ways in individual languages.

14. Even in the most common system of diminutive in Tibetan which involves among other things a change of the vowel to /i/, the actual diminutive particle is -u.

15. The high front vowel is not significant, as it usually disappears after the application of vowel-harmony.

16. Haas, (1970) also: Nichols (1971), outlined in Chapter 4.

18. For a study of this type of "child language" I refer to: Avram, A., 'De la langue qu'on parle aux enfants roumains', 1967.

19. This could be taken as an explanation of the virtual, if not total absence of front rounded vowels in diminutive systems.

6. Diminutive and the Grammar

So far we have ignored the question of how diminutives are actually formed; how do they fit into the grammar of a language? Naturally one could not begin to attempt writing grammars, even for diminutive-formation, for all the languages in our data. Accordingly I will only look at a few aspects, theories and ideas. First of all a sample problem, the distribution of diminutive allomorphs in Dutch, will be presented along with various attempts to solve it. Following this, I will attempt to tackle some aspects of the concept of productivity as it affects diminutives. In 6.3 the model for word formation proposed by Aronoff (1976) will be considered in the light of its ability to cope with diminutive derivation. Finally, in 6.4, some aspects of English diminutives will be highlighted.

6.1 Diminutives and Rules; a sample problem from Dutch

There is no doubt that the distribution of the allomorphs of the Dutch diminutive suffix -tje is problematic.[1] This was recognised early on: Kruisinga (1915) mentions it and he attempts a more detailed analysis in 1942. Cohen (1958:42ff), whose analysis may be found in Appendix A, handles -tje and -etje as follows:

(a) /-tjə/ : after "uncovered" (ongedekte)[2] vowels; diphthongs; in unstressed final syllables: after /ə/: jongen 'boy' [3] jongetje and after vowels with secondary stress: auto autootje, oma 'granny' omaatje. This group also includes such diphthongs as ‹aai›, ‹eeu›, ‹ieu›, ‹ooi› etc.: leeuw 'lion' leeuwtje, fooi 'tip' fooitje, duw 'a push' duwtje. /-tjə/ is also found after /n, l, r/ if they are preceded by an uncovered vowel: maan 'moon' maantje, been 'leg' beentje,...

or diphthong: tuin 'garden' tuintje. After /l/ wieltje, also after an unstressed final syllable including a /ə/: lepel 'spoon' lepeltje, tafel 'table' tafeltje. With final /r/: paar 'pair' paartje, boer 'farmer', boertje, uur 'hour' uurtje, with unstressed final syllable: kikker 'frog' kikkertje, and weakly stressed final syllable: traktor 'tractor' traktortje, motor 'engine, motor' motortje.

(b) /-ətjə/: after final /m, n, ŋ, l, r/ preceded by covered, stressed vowels: kam 'comb' kammetje, kan 'jug' kannetje, ring 'ring' ringetje; this category also includes weakly stressed words in -ling: wandeling 'a walk' wandelingetje, leerling 'pupil' leerlingetje. With /l, r/: bal 'ball' balletje, ster 'star' sterretje etc.

He ends up with pairs such as

weg	'road'	wegje	
		weggetje	'road + Dim'
bloem	'flower'	bloemetje	
		bloempje	
pop	'doll'	poppetje	
		popje	etc.

and "exceptions" like: big 'piglet' biggetje (not: ?bigje), Jan, Jantje.

Brandt Corstius (1967) used ALGOL-60 to write a computer programme for the formation of diminutive nouns in Dutch. His data was taken from a dictionary, the Woordenlijst van de Nederlandse taal, The Hague, 1954. He found that his programme produced 98% of those words that add an allomorph other than -je. The remaining 2% of "false" answers contained the following:

(1) Abbreviations

(2) Compounds such as: staatslot 'ticket in national lottery' *Staatslotje.[4] If the programme was altered to produce staatslootje, problems would occur for the production of compound forms like houtvlot 'timber-raft' houtvlotje.

(3) Words which require phonological or phonetic information:

(a) recognising /ə/ to distinguish between

zeester /'ze:stɛr/ 'star-fish' zeesterretje

meester /'me:stər/ 'master' meestertje

(b) knowledge about word-stress. The author blames this for the fact that all nouns in -(l)ing produced diminutives in -inkje, thus producing the wrong diminutives in words like:

tekening 'drawing' tekeningetje

(4) Foreign words, especially French words spelled with final -C, but pronounced with final -V (the programme is based on orthographic entries): depot, jabot etc. are all treated the same as lot, pot etc.

(5) Diminutives in -ke could not be produced.

(6) "Marginal" or "irregular" diminutives such as schrede 'pace, stride" schreetje and once again bloem > bloemetje.

Brandt Corstius suggests that these "exceptional" diminutives should be entered in the lexicon.

6.1.1 Haverkamp-Lubbers and Kooij (1971)

This study by the "Werkgroep Verkleinwoord" ('Working-group Diminutive') of the linguistic institute at the University of Amsterdam is based largely on the principles established by Chomsky and Halle (1968; SPE). Like most other Dutch diminutivists from Cohen

(1958) onwards, they take /-tjə/ as the basic form of the morpheme, from which all the other forms are derived as allomorphs (p.4). This is justified on the grounds that

- /t/- deletion seems more likely than /t/- insertion.
- it was convenient when making up rules.

They recognise the main problem area concerning the distribution of /tjə/ vs /ətjə/ to be words ending in a nasal or liquid e.g.

maan	'moon'	maantje	but	man	'man'	mannetje
koning	'king'	koninkje[5]		oefening	'exercise'	oefeningetje
paling	'eel'	palinkje		leerling	'pupil'	leerlingetje
traktor	'tractor'	traktortje		tor	'beetle'	torretje

Like Cohen (1958) the authors recognise the fact that stress is involved in the selection of /tjə/ vs /ətjə/. They summarise the conditions as follows:

- "/ətjə/ occurs after lax vowels followed by nasals/liquids unless the vowel immediately before the final vowel has primary stress". This covers monosyllabic words as well as oefening, wandeling 'walk' etc.
- "/ətjə/ also occurs after lax vowels followed by nasals/liquids unless the final syllable is unstressed". This is the case when a suffix or a "morphologically analysable part of a word" follows a syllable with primary stress e.g.: woning 'dwelling' woninkje, paling etc.

According to the authors, this is an improvement over Cohen, who was rather vague for example about "weakly stressed words in -ling"; oefening etc. should also be covered; leerling is still an exception, as are naarling, bekeerling etc.

There are also a number of words which can take both forms of the suffix, with or without /ə/: bloempje v. bloemetje. All these words have one of the vowels /i, u, y/, which do not need a [+tense] specification in Dutch (cf. Moulton 1962). The /ə/- insertion does not occur where a nasal or liquid is immediately preceded by another nasal or liquid e.g.: urn > urntje. They finally formulate the following general rule for /ə/- insertion, presented on p.17:

$$\emptyset \rightarrow \text{ə} \;/\; \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} V \\ \text{stress} \end{bmatrix} C_1 \text{ə}\, C_1 \right\} \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} V \\ +\text{tense} \\ +\text{stress} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} +\text{son} \\ +\text{cons} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} +\text{son} \\ +\text{voc} \\ +\text{cons} \end{bmatrix} \right\} \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} V \\ +\text{stress} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} +\text{son} \\ +\text{cons} \end{bmatrix} \text{____ tj} \right\} \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} V \\ -\text{tense} \end{bmatrix} \right)$$

According to H-L & K (1971:18), this covers the following types:

kán # tj	>	kánnetje
wándeling # tj	>	wándelingetje
léer # ling	>	léerlingetje

The authors themselves admit that the rule is not particularly elegant.

6.1.2. Gussenhoven (1978)

A further attempt to improve on H-L & K's rule was presented by Gussenhoven. Gussenhoven (1978:208-9) recognises the following

classes:

(1) Nouns in /l, r, m, n, ŋ / - i.e.: in a segment which is [+ sonorant] and [+ cons] - preceded by a lax vowel which take /ə/ e.g.:

<u>bal</u>	'ball'	<u>balletje</u>
<u>pen</u>		<u>pennetje</u>
<u>schol</u>	'plaice'	<u>scholletje</u>

(2) If the vowel is not stressed, no /ə/- insertion takes place:

<u>winkel</u>	'shop'	<u>winkeltje</u>
<u>radar</u>		<u>radartje</u>
<u>paling</u>		<u>palinkje</u>

(3) In polysyllabic words with primary stress on the antepenultimate syllable, /ə/- insertion does take place, even though the final syllable is unstressed (cf. H-L & K (1971)):

<u>vergadering</u>	'meeting'	<u>vergaderingetje</u>
<u>wandeling</u>		<u>wandelingetje</u>
<u>bariton</u>		<u>baritonnetje</u>

There are two major exceptions to these general rules:

(a) Some words of type 2 do have /ə/- insertion:

<u>leerling</u>		
<u>tweeling</u>	'twins'	<u>tweelingetje</u>

(b) Some words of type 3 do not have /ə/- insertion:

<u>kriterium</u>	'criterion'	<u>kriteriumpje</u>
<u>terrarium</u>		<u>terrariumpje</u>
<u>beoordeling</u>	'appraisal'	<u>beoordelinkje</u>

Gussenhoven (1978:210) considers <u>#ling</u> as a suffix whose #-boundary cannot be penetrated by the /ə/- insertion rule e.g.: <u>tweeling</u>. As <u>wandeling</u>, for example, is made up of <u>wandel + ing</u>, it is not affected and yet it too has /ə/- insertion. For this and similar forms in class 3, Gussenhoven proposed a 'rhythmic' explanation.

Gussenhoven adopts the approach formulated by Van den Berg (1975) for the dialect of Utrecht:

"If the last syllable (consisting of

$$C_0 \begin{bmatrix} V \\ +\ lax \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} +\ cons \\ +\ son \end{bmatrix})$$

is rhythmically stronger than the penultimate syllable, /ə/ is inserted between that syllable and + tjə. The last syllable is stronger in this sense if:

(1) It has primary stress.

(2) The antepenultimate syllable has primary stress and:

(a) The last syllable does not have /I/ or /ə/ or:

(b) The last syllable has /I/ and the penultimate /ə/."

If we assume, with Moulton (1962), that /ə/ is neither lax nor tense, Gussenhoven provides the following rule:

$$\emptyset \rightarrow ə \Big/ \left(\begin{bmatrix} -stress \\ \langle ə \rangle_b \end{bmatrix} C_0 \right) \begin{bmatrix} V \\ +\ lax \\ \langle I \rangle_a \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} +\ son' \\ +\ cons \end{bmatrix} +\ ____\ tjə$$

if a, then b

This rule excludes the following:

a. Nouns which form diminutives either with or without /ə/-insertion.

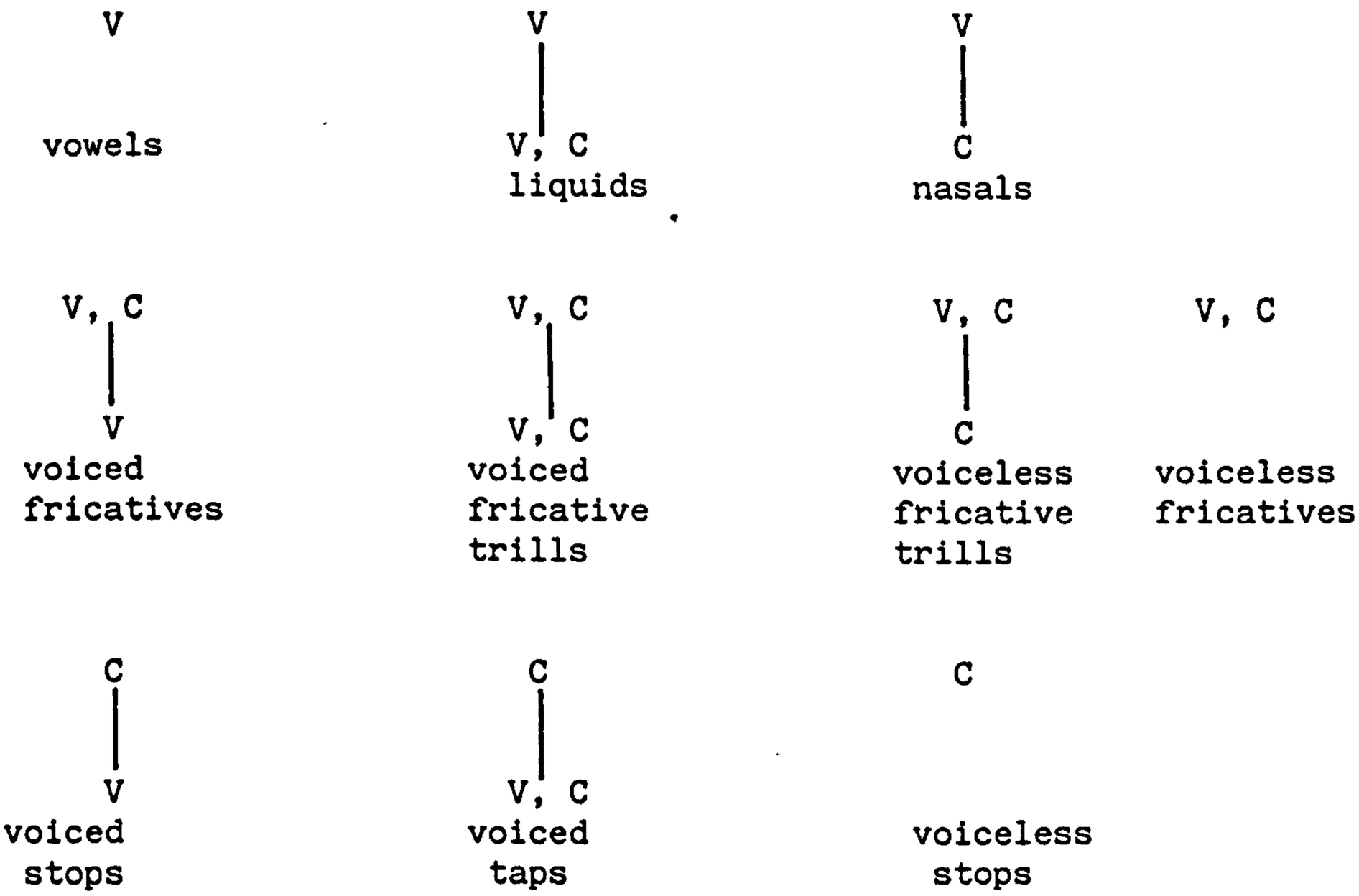
b. Many nouns with an irregular plural, which form diminutives either obligatorily or optionally from this plural form (viz. Dutch section Appendix A; cf. Tiersma (1980)).

Gussenhoven (1978:211) suggests putting this information in the lexicon.

6.1.3 Ewen (1978)

Unlike the previous studies, Ewen (1978:114) follows a dependency approach to the problem, because "... an approach based on Distinctive Features is inadequate to account for the forms of the diminutive suffix after words ending in a sonorant consonant."

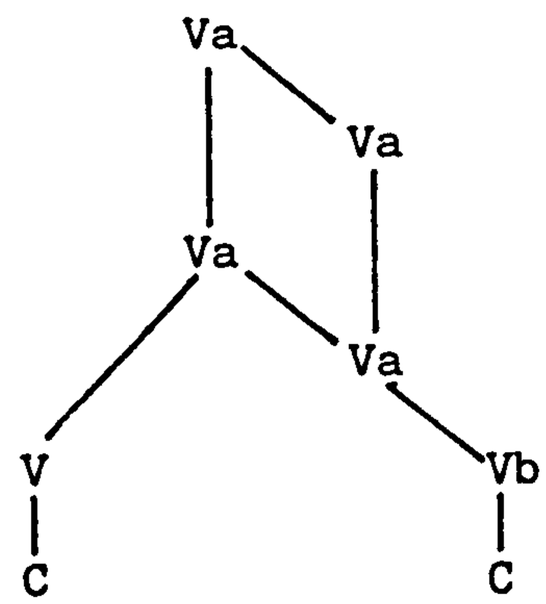
In dependency phonology, as outlined by Anderson & Jones (1977:123), each segment has a phonatory and an articulatory "gesture". The phonatory gesture for each segment is made up of some combination of 2 basic components. These components are |V| ('vocalic') and |C| ('consonantal'). These components can occur as nodes in dependency trees. Ewen (1977:316 & 1978:154) uses the following "characterisation of various segment-types":



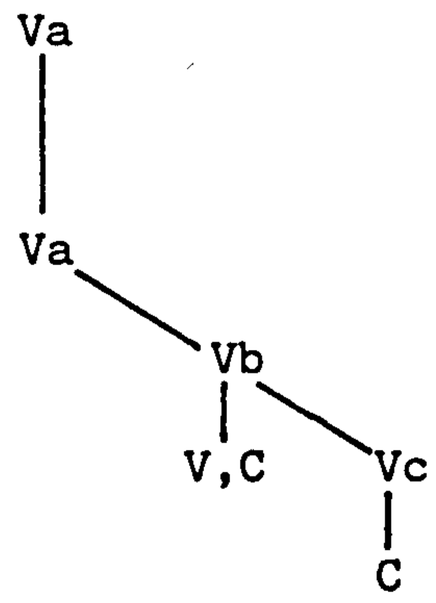
The system ranges from one extreme (V) at top left, through various intermediate stages to another extreme (C) at bottom right. It shows the similarity between nasals and voiced stops in that both contain one |C| and one |V|, but for nasals, $|V| \rightrightarrows |C|$ ('|V| governs |C|') while for voiced stops, $|C| \rightrightarrows |V|$.

For voiceless fricatives, however, |V| and |C| are mutually dependent ($|V| \rightleftarrows |C|$). Ewen (ibid:155) uses this to compare 3 types of monosyllabic word:

<u>maan</u>

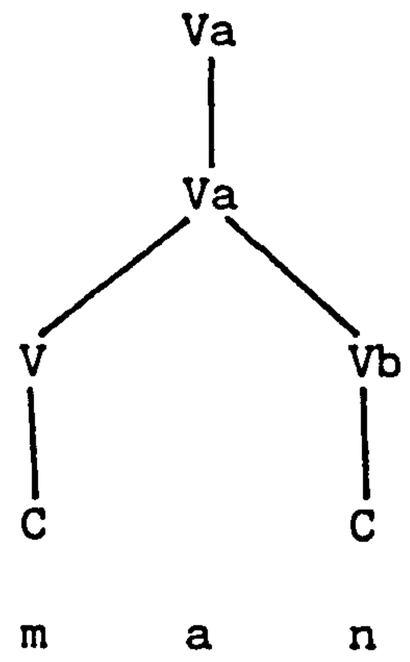


<u>urn</u>



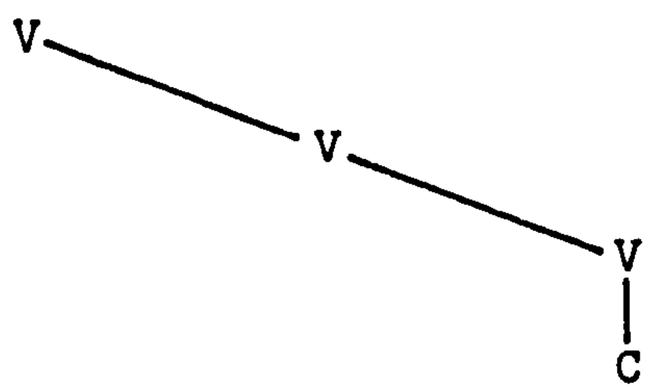
Both of these take /-tjə/

<u>man</u>

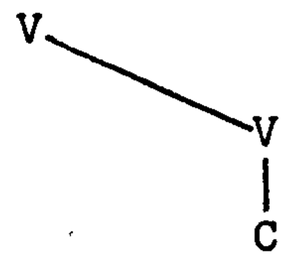


This takes /-ətjə/.

Note that "segments with a high |V| component tend to come closer to the syllabic than low |V| elements" (Anderson and Jones 1977:124). What characterises both <u>maan</u> and <u>urn</u> as being members of the same natural class is the following sub-structure:

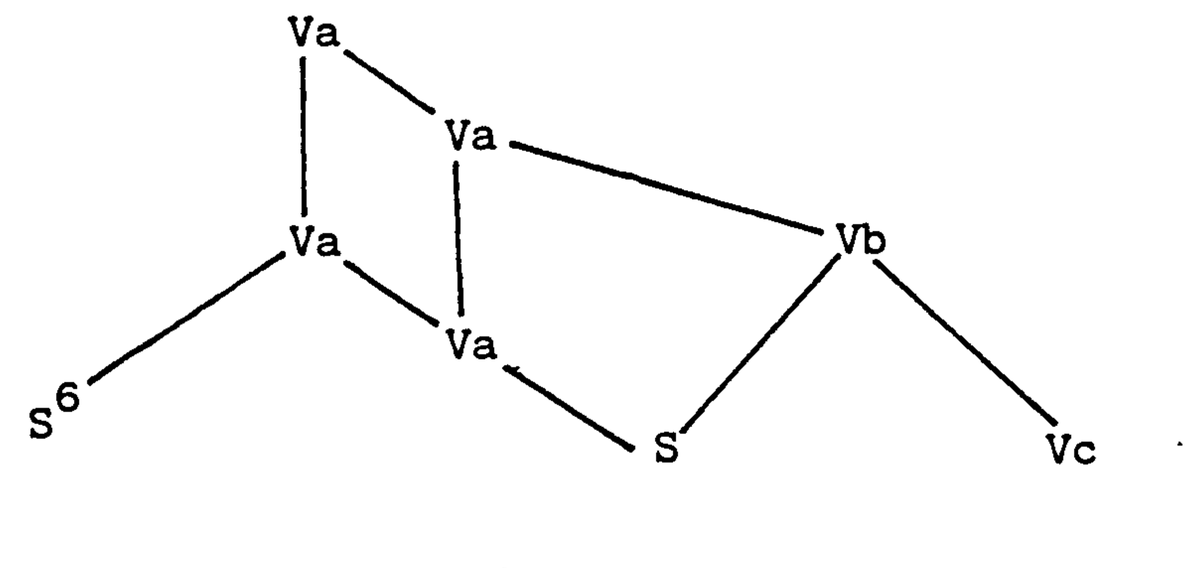


This structure, in which V ⟹ V ⟹ V = C is not contained in <u>man</u>, which instead is characterised by the sub-structure:

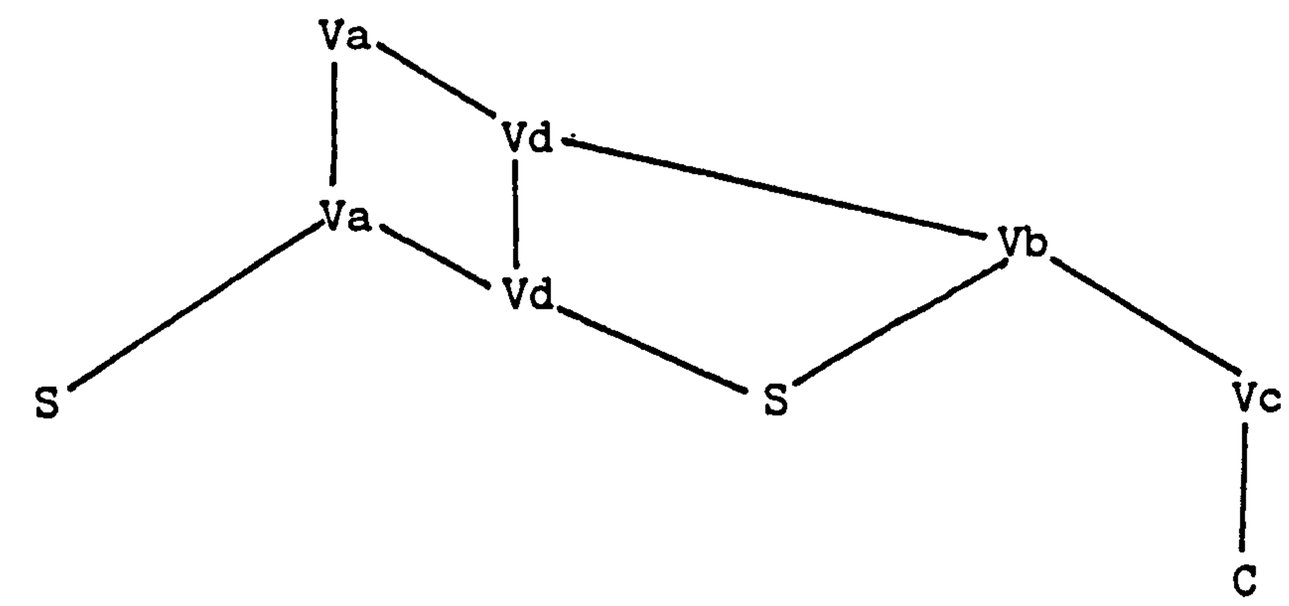


For monosyllabic words these structures form the basis for /ə/-insertion. Is the same true for polysyllabic words? Ewen (ibid: 157) gives the following trees for words, which do not insert /ə/:

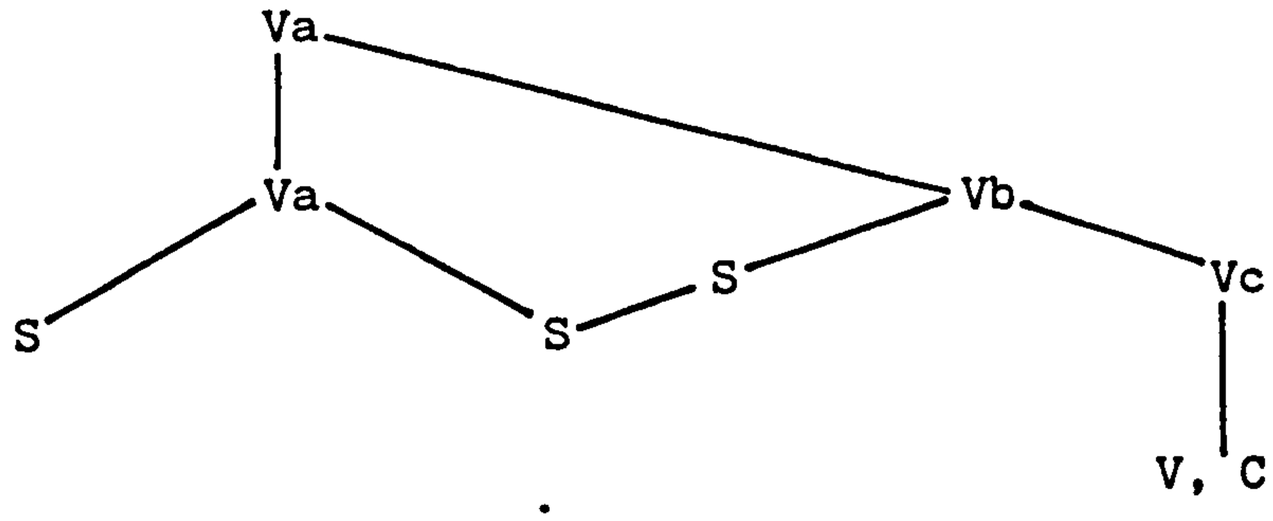
<u>woning</u> 'dwelling'



<u>scheiding</u> 'parting'



deksel

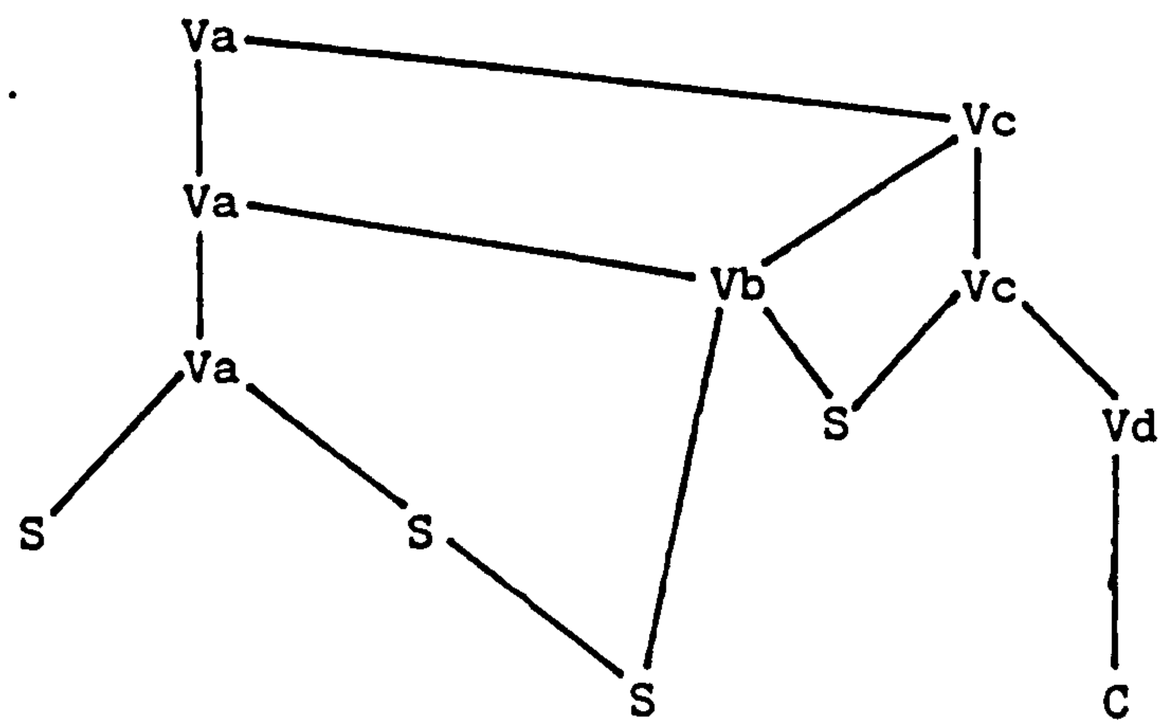


d ɛ k s ə l

All of these words have the basic structure Va⟹ Vb⟹Vc ⟹ (V ,C,) with a possible Vd between Va and Vb. In the case of a long vowel, this Vd is identical to Va, as in woning. In scheiding, where a diphthong occurs, Va and Vd are different. All these forms which take /-tjə/, contain the structure V⟹ V⟹ V ⟹ C, which is exactly the same as that for their monosyllabic counterparts.

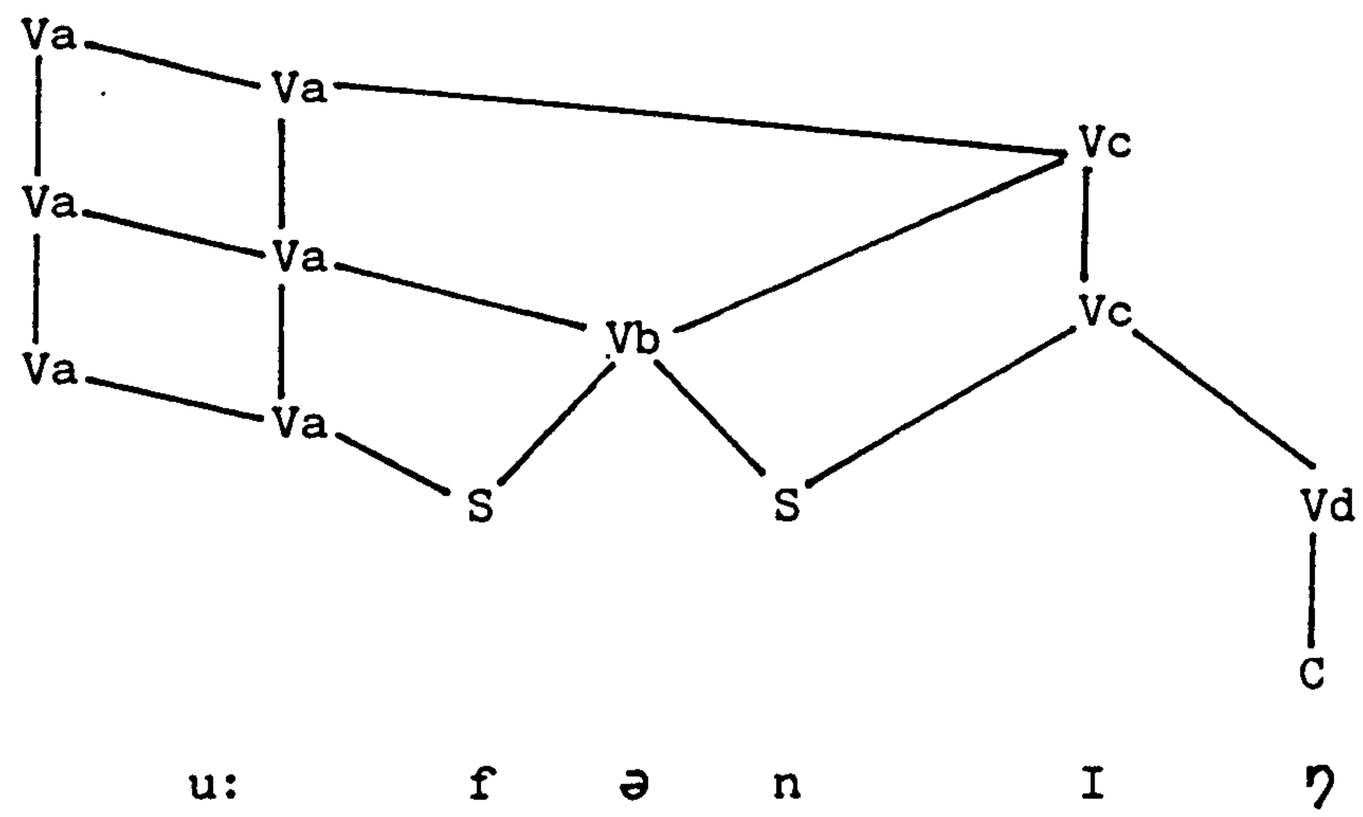
The polysyllabic nouns which take /- ətjə / have the following structure:

wandeling



w a n d ə l I ŋ

<u>oefening</u>



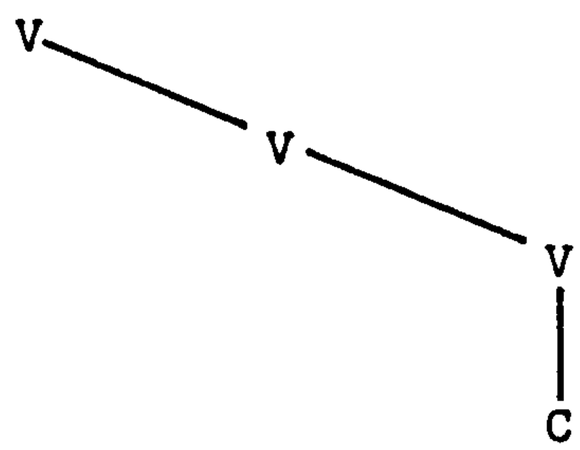
u: f ə n I ʔ

"In these words the final syllable has greater stress than the penultimate, and this is reflected by the relative dependency of Vb and Vc" (1978:159).

Here the formulation is slightly more complicated:

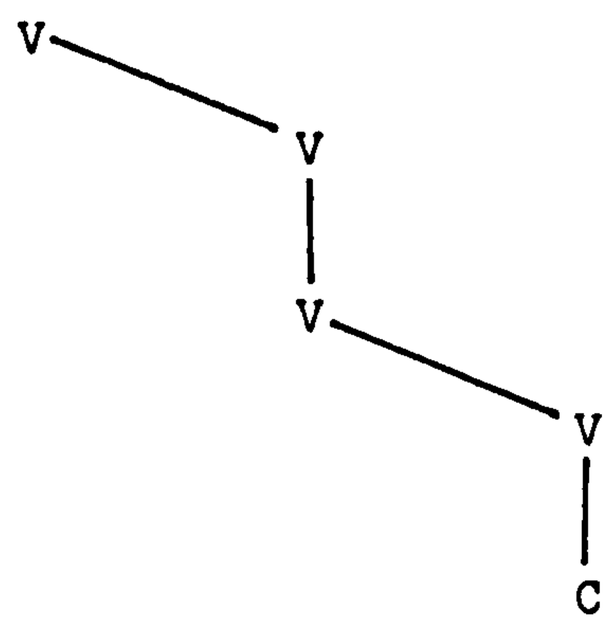
"Polysyllabic words which take <-etje>, might be distinguished from those which do not, by the fact that [the latter] does not contain the structure ...." (ibid):

(a)

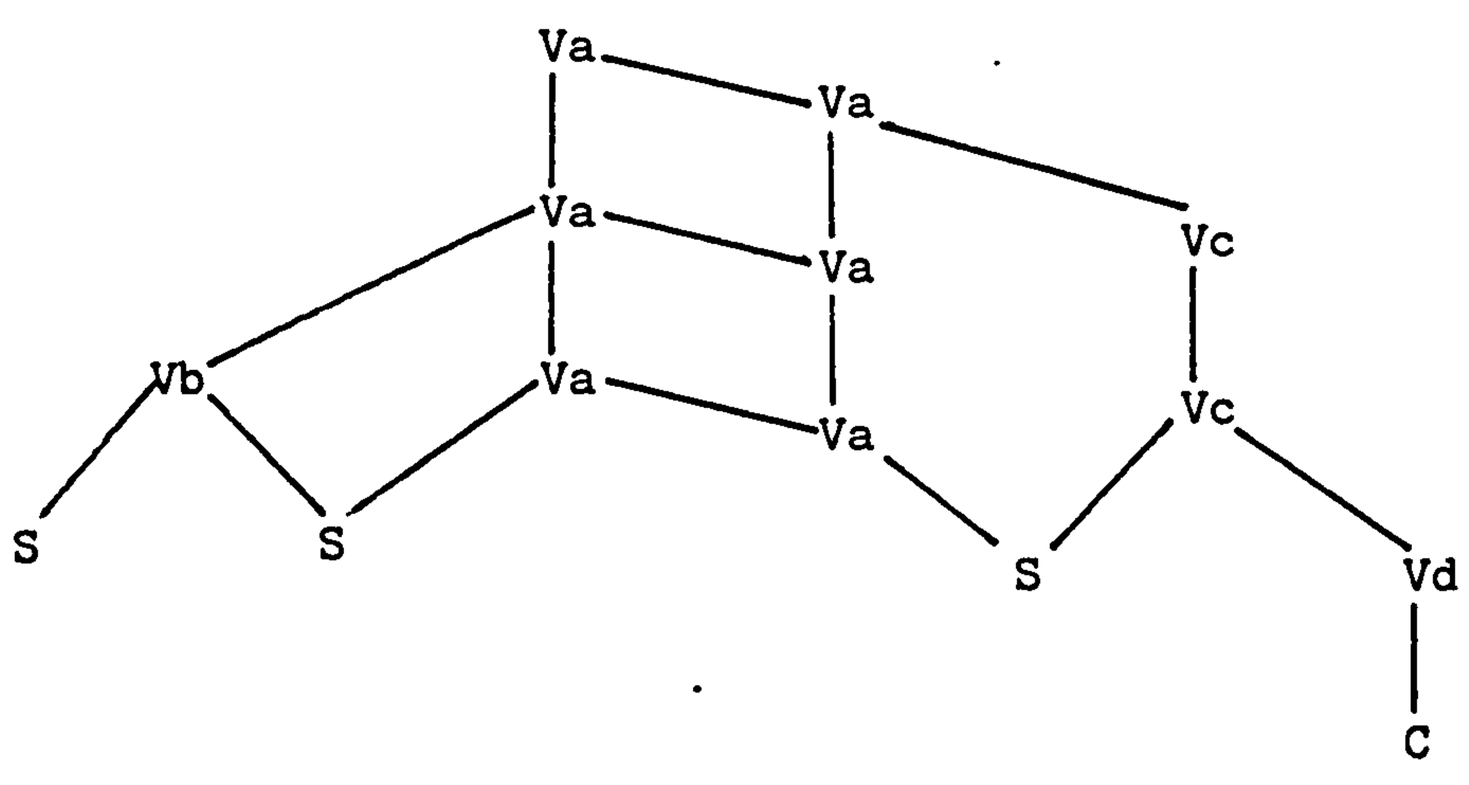


Instead it contains the structure

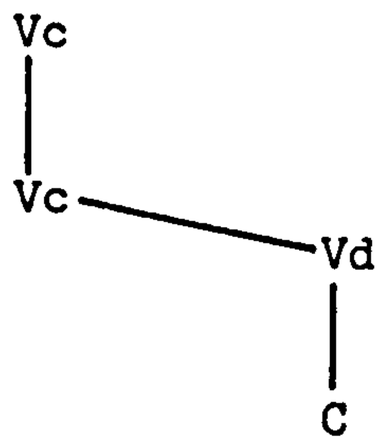
(b)



These structures are not equivalent, because "What a structure like (b) indicates is that there is another syllable somewhere in the structure which has a higher degree of dependency ..." (ibid). However, supposing a word contains the sub-structure in (b) and yet does not take /ə/ as in:

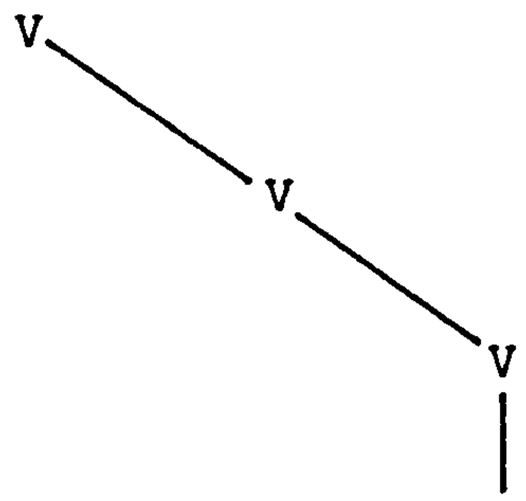


If the rule is refined to respond to the following version of (b), this problem is overcome:

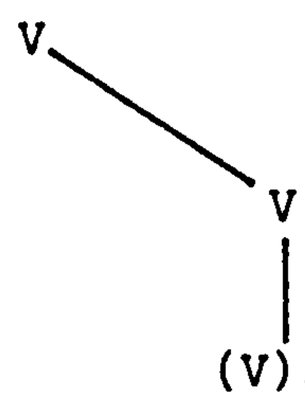


As it allows for the intervention of a vowel, with lower stress than the final vowel, between it and the primary stressed vowel i.e.: a vowel which is dependent on the final vowel, so "diminutive selection depends on the structure beginning with the last vowel in the item which has another vowel preceding and directly dependent on it. If there is no such vowel, the primary stressed vowel is the relevant one." (160)

This is clearly a much more satisfactory specification than that of H-L & K (1971) or that of Gussenhoven (1978). Ewen can simply state that



characterises all sequences ending in a nasal or a liquid which take ⟨-tje⟩, ⟨-pje⟩, ⟨-kje⟩, etc. whereas



characterises all such sequences which take ⟨-etje⟩.

6.1.4 Conclusions

A few more contributions have been made to the attempts to solve these problems. Most recent among these must be Robinson (1980), whose analysis in terms of "Upside-down Phonology" or UPD does not seem to contribute anything worthwhile to the argument. Besides, the author appears to be unaware either of Gussenhoven (1978) or of Ewen (1978) and the paper refers back to H-L & K (1971) and uses their rules on the whole. It also relies on a number of regional dialect forms such as hemmetje < hemd 'shirt, vest', where standard Dutch would use hemdje or hempje.

Booij (1981:133), also tries to tackle the problem, but only briefly, in the context of a generative phonology of Dutch. The most satisfactory contribution then seems to be that of Ewen (1978), provided that one accepts the principles of dependency phonology. There seems little doubt, however, about this model's suitability for handling the problems under discussion.

6.2 Productivity

The notion of productivity is crucial to the question of word-formation rules in a grammar. Matthews (1974), however, only mentions the term in passing and this may point to the fact that the term is very difficult to define. Is any rule fully productive? And if it is not, when does a rule become non-productive or semi-productive? One scholar who has probably written more about the concept of productivity than any other is the Dutch philologist E.M. Uhlenbeck. He writes in The Study of Word-Classes in Javanese (1953:51-2)

> "... non-productive procédés, ... can be extended over new material only incidentally, or for special stylistic purposes. The productive procédés are generally recognisable by the fact of their applying to a very large set of words. The quantitative aspect is nevertheless not essential: what is essential is the generative aspect, the possibility that a speaker will apply such a procédé to words to which it has never been applied before, because he knows that words formed according to this procédé will be immediately comprehensible to the person addressed."

It is interesting that he already questions the importance of the purely quantitative approach to productivity, a point made more forcefully perhaps by Aronoff (1976:36), who suggests an index of productivity whereby for every WFR (Word Formation Rule), we find "the ratio of possible to actually listed words". He does qualify this however by pointing at some of the problems involved in such an analysis. Some affixes are more productive

on some bases than on others, for example.

There is also the problem that to calculate the ratio suggested above, all newly made up words would have to be entered in a list, but this defeats the purpose of a productive WFR to a large extent. What is perhaps more important is the speaker's intuition concerning the "likelihood of being a word of the speaker's active vocabulary" (37). A very crucial point made by Aronoff (1976:3.2.1) concerns the links between productivity and semantics. He introduces the term "coherence": "We say that a WFR is coherent when the words formed by that rule adhere closely to the meaning assigned to them by the semantic function of the rule". Aronoff (39) suggests that "there is a direct link between semantic coherence and productivity". In other words the more productive a WFR the more predictable the semantic change it produces. This has various implications. It might imply, and this seems intuitively correct, that the older a rule and the more forms produced by that rule become lexicalised with a specialised meaning, the less productive the rule becomes. This might well explain why, for example, the Scots diminutive suffix <u>-ock</u> gradually gave way to <u>-ie</u>, which was felt to be more productive (cf. Chapter 8).. As Aronoff (1976: 45) himself puts it: "The listing of the output of a WFR in the lexicon leads to a loss in productivity".

Booij (1981:139) distinguishes between productive and non-productive rules. He points out that even a word like Du. <u>dievegge</u> 'female thief', which one would normally tend to assign to the lexicon as it is the only example of a word with the affix <u>-egge</u>, can still be linked to the word <u>dief</u> 'thief' and should therefore be derived by a (non-productive) rule.[8] Bauer (1983:67) mentions

recursiveness as an important element of productivity in derivational morphology. He also discusses (82ff) the notion of semi-productivity, a concept not accepted by many other scholars, who distinguish only between productive and unproductive processes.[9] He illustrates it with a not altogether convincing example from Marchand (1969). Basically, I suppose semi-productivity is anything between fully productive, if there is such a thing, and non-productive.

6.2.1 Productivity in Relation to Diminutives

When we look at our own data we can certainly distinguish such degrees of productivity. Most of our information about productivity, however, is anecdotal. On this basis we can say that diminutive as such is more productive in Spanish than in French and more productive in Dutch than in English. According to my informants, diminutive is not really productive in Scottish Gaelic, although the class of words that form diminutives, or have a diminutive form anyway, is so large, that a rule may still be the easiest way to handle it. Perhaps this is semi-productivity?

6.2.1.1 Conditions on Bases for Diminutive WFRs

Let us now consider diminutive formation in more detail. Even when we encounter a "fully" productive affix in a language where diminutive is "fully" productive, we are likely to encounter certain conditions or restrictions on the base to which the affix may be attached. According to Booij (1977:122ff) these conditions may be of three distinct types

(i) phonological conditions

(ii) morphological conditions

(iii) syntactic conditions

I would like to add to these:

(iv) semantic conditions[10]

(i) phonological conditions in Dutch were discussed at length in 6.1. The problem is not usually as complicated as it is in Dutch. Ettinger (1974:75-6) gives the example of the distribution of the German diminutive suffixes -chen and -lein. These two suffixes are in free variation except in a few environments. Thus only -chen can be used with a base with a final <-l(e)>, while only -lein can be used after final <-ch>, <-g> or <-ng> . e.g.:

Spiel	'game'	Spielchen	
		*Spiellein	
Bach	'stream, burn'	Bächlein	
		*Bächchen	
but Haus	'house'	Häuschen	
		Häuslein	

Ettinger (1974) gives many other examples of such restrictions in other languages. Some of these are outlined in Appendix A. Another example of a phonological condition on the base is the fact that English -ie/-y is only productive on monosyllabic bases (see 6.2.2).

(ii) morphological conditions occur when diminutive formation is dependent upon morphological criteria in the base. A negative example is given by Ettinger (1974:366),[11] who points out that when a German noun has the female marker -in in its base, it cannot form a diminutive. Seidel-Slotty (1974:24) had already observed that this was the case with:

Freundin	'girl-friend'					*Freundinchen

Ettinger gives:

Hund	'dog'	Hündchen;	Hündin	'bitch'	*Hündinchen
Fuchs	'fox'	Füchslein;	Füchsin	'vixen'	*Füchsinchen
Affe	'monkey, ape'	Äffchen;	Äffin		*Äffinchen

In many languages the presence of one diminutive suffix also prevents the addition of another one; as a result Du. Meisje 'girl' and Germ. Mädchen do not have diminutive forms. Where diminutive suffixes can be added recursively (see 6.3.1) this does not arise.

(iii) syntactic conditions on diminutive formation largely concern the problem of which lexical category can form diminutives (cf. Aronoff 1967:47ff). Ettinger (1980:186) gives an interesting diagram representing suffixes in four romance languages and the lexical categories with which they can occur:

	Rumanian	Italian	Portuguese	Spanish
Noun	-UŢ-, -EL	-EU-. -ON-	-INH-	-IT-
Adj.	-UŢ-, -EL	-EU-, -ON-	-INH-	-IT-
Adv.	-EL	-ON-	-INH-	-IT-
Verb		-EU-	-INH-	-IT-
Pro.			-INH-	-IT-
Interj.				-IT-

We may also encounter a situation where although the same suffix may occur with two different lexical categories, it is fully productive on one, whereas on the other, only a limited number of lexical items form diminutives with that suffix (cf. 8.1.2.2). Booij (1977:140), who mentions this "affix generalisation" in relation to Dutch diminutives, points out that the fact that

> ".... the diminutive suffix is normally attached to nouns.... but has also been attached to a few verbs and particles. (This) does not imply, however, that we should mention both N, V and Particle as suitable syntactic categories in the WF-rule for the diminutive suffix, because in such a way, the exceptional character of the diminutives derived from verbs and particles would be obscured ...."

In fact the examples Booij (1977:136-7) mentions all involve the change from one lexical category →N; this is quite different from the romance examples Ettinger refers to, where the diminutive affix does not effect a change in lexical category. I will return to this general question in Chapter 8.

(iv) - it became apparent in Chapter 3 that semantics does not normally prevent the addition of a diminutive affix. Even an object as large as a mountain may be diminutivised as in Sw.Ger. Bergli. Nor does the presence of an adjective referring to large size prevent the use of a diminutive form; the following was heard on "Tomorrow's World" BBC 1 (27:9:84):

> "They have their fat in a very large droplet."

There is some evidence, however, that words referring to certain objects, properties, etc, form diminutives more readily than others. As far as I am aware, the only paper which considers this phenomenon in some detail is Lăzaro-Mora (1976). He finds that there are no semantic limitations on diminutives in Spanish. Even words whose referent cannot possibly be reduced in size can form diminutives: docena 'dozen', docenita, semana 'week' semanita, etc. (ibid:44).

> "Evidentemente, los nombres que mejor se prestan a recibir las notas de disminución y afecto (o sólo de afecto) son los concretos, es decir los que significan "cosas" que el hablante puede estimar o desestimar, por el hecho de convivir con ellas."

('Obviously, the nouns which most readily form diminutives, objective and subjective (or only subjective), are the concrete ones, that is to say, those which refer to "things" which the speaker can appreciate or dislike, because of the fact that he lives surrounded by them.')

He has, however, found a number of nouns even in this category which seem to resist diminutivisation, although the only category which seems to resist this completely is that of augmentatives: *perrazotito. This may of course be a morphological restriction.

There are a number of other categories which resist diminutive formation on the whole. This resistance may be overridden if exceptional emotion is being expressed, when the objective meaning of the word in question is being reduced at the expense of emotional criteria. These categories are:

a. names of languages

b. names of feast-days and festivals

c. place-names[12]

d. names of territories or of the office which controls them: decanato 'deanship', maeztrazgo 'office of grand master'

e. names of professions or activities in -ista: *socialista - ita (this may be a morphological or even a phonological restriction)

f. names of points of the compass: * nortito, and of "orientation": levante, occidente etc.

g. abstract nouns, especially those with an abstract noun forming suffix: -eza, -ía, -ismo, -ad, -ura

h. action nouns, for example those in -ancia/-encia, -anza, -ción, -emiento/-imiento, -aje and -ia.

The latter two categories may form diminutives if they are recategorised as concrete nouns; Lázaro-Mora (p.50) gives the following examples: licencia 'permission, licence, licentiousness' but Ya tengo mi licencita de caza 'I've got my hunting licence'.

His conclusion, then, is:

> "Todo nombre, si lo decide el hablante, puede presentarse en diminutivo, aunque ello vaya en contra de la norma lingüística." (p.56)
>
> 'Every noun can, if the speaker wishes, occur as a diminutive, even if this contravenes the linguistic norm.'

Aronoff (1976:48ff) allows for the input of a WFR to be semantically specified:

> "It appears to be a general fact that the syntactic and semantic conditions on the base of a WFR are those of category, subcategory, selection and lexically governed entailment and presupposition."

Although we might explain the inability of the Spanish diminutive suffix to follow an augmentative suffix as a morphological condition, the real reason probably has to be sought in a clash of meanings of some kind. Ettinger (1974:271-2) has shown, however, that a diminutive suffix can be followed by an augmentative suffix:

guapo	'handsome'	guapeton
hombre	'man'	hombreton

This facility is limited to the sequence -et-on, which should perhaps be regarded as an expressive double suffix -eton.

6.2.2 Productivity of Standard English Diminutives

At this point, it is perhaps interesting to consider, briefly, the relative productivity of the English diminutive suffixes -ie/-y, -let, -ette, and -ino found in Appendix A (see also 6.4).

The "endearing" suffix -ie/-y is by far the most productive and this is due to the very fact that it is an "endearing" or subjective diminutive suffix. The other suffixes all have a primarily objective diminutive function, so when comparing Toady[13] with toadlet, we would expect the less productive toadlet to enter the lexicon before the former example. If we measure productivity by sheer number, -ie/-y is easily the most productive. There are, however, some restrictions as to its use. It is normally used on nouns, although a few examples of other lexical categories exist. Normally the suffix has a nominalising function in these cases: fatty, shorty, etc, but a few examples exist where this is not the case e.g.: comfy < comfortable (Adj.). The most important condition on this suffix is that it is used almost exclusively on monosyllabic bases. If a base is not monosyllabic, it may be reduced to this form before the suffix is added (cf. 6.4.1). The latter rule widens the application of -ie/-y considerably. The main reason for its productivity, however, must lie in the fact that it is the only one of the four suffixes which has a primarily subjective function.

The other three suffixes are primarily objective diminutive and a comparison of these is therefore more valid. The productivity of -ino is severely restricted by the fact that it can only be used to produce new names for yet smaller subatomic particles. The only examples I have encountered, by monitoring conversations and the media over the past few years are: gravitino, photino and neutrino. As the formation of these forms is very regular, I would still propose a rule rather than a listing in the lexicon, despite the severe restrictions on its productivity (cf. 6.4.2).

A comparison of -let and -ette is perhaps more fruitful. My data, collected as outlined above, are as follows:[14]

-let

	punlet	ringlets	statelet
(consumer)	boomlet	textlet	wifelet
	teachestlet	nitlet	clumplets
	tinlet	fortlet	newtlet
	toadlet	moonlets	egglets

-ette

crocodilette	pepperette	diplomatette
smilette	trailette	Synchronettes
newscasterette	majorette (adj.)	openingette
tantrette	featurette	snagette
drawbackette		

Thus 15 more or less original examples of -let and 13 of -ette. Of the latter, newscasterette, diplomatette and Synchronettes are probably primarily female, rather than diminutive, although diplomatette is perhaps partly diminutive, as it was found in the following context:

> "I was a sort of ordinary little mini diplomatette."
> (said by Beverley Anderson, on "Midweek", BBC Radio 4, 24:5:84.)

Thus by weight of numbers, -let is more productive than -ette.

If we consider the conditions on their use, we find some interesting results (always taking into account our limited data). Of the 15 examples with -let, 14 are monosyllabic bases; teachestlet is a compound, where the second member, to which -let is attached, is monosyllabic.

Of the 13 bases + -ette, only 2 are monosyllabic: smile and snag, 4 are trisyllabic: crocodile, newscaster (compound), diplomate and opening. The other examples are formed from bisyllabic bases: pepper; tantrum and trailer (truncated to tantr- and trail- before the suffix was added); major (A) may contain a pun on the noun majorette and is a very marginal example; feature and drawback. The actual base for Synchronette, as in "The Southend Synchronettes" is obscure (the link is with synchronised swimming).

Something which is not evident from our data, is that -ette is more likely to be added after a final consonant than after a vowel - although examples of this type can be found, e.g. partyette - whereas -let could be added after a vowel without any problems. One point which seems rather striking is that two of the 13 bases for -ette end in /l/ and one is truncated to end in /l/, while none of the bases for -let end in /l/. Is it possible that with a base in <-l>, -let cannot be used, as with German -lein? This would explain the one monosyllabic base with -ette: smile + -ette. The reason for this would be that if -let were to be added to a base in /l/, there would be three possibilities:

a. A long /l/ could be formed.

b. The /l/ from the base could be dropped.

c. The /l/ of the suffix could be dropped.

English phonology does not allow (a), while (b) as well as (c) would automatically lead to -let > -ette, with the change in stress only being a minor problem. It would seem, then, that -ette and -let are in complementary distribution. This has not always been the case and if we consider the lexicalised examples

with these suffixes (viz. Appendix A) it emerges as a general trend only, although no other scholar seems to mention even this. However, it would probably take decades and several observers to collect enough data to support this observation, given the rarity of these suffixes. Until such research produces counter-examples, I think it is reasonable to assume that -let and -ette as productive suffixes in contemporary standard English are in complementary distribution - or at least that they show a strong tendency in that direction, which may well lead to a situation where they are in complementary distribution. As things stand at the moment, a form that violates this rule e.g.: ? moonette is not altogether unacceptable, although it does sound more "marked" somehow than moonlet. It should be emphasised, however, that the situation is by no means clear-cut as is evident from an example like tantrum > tantrette, a form which cannot be predicted, as tantrumette seems perfectly acceptable. Clearly in this sort of area, a great deal of linguistic creativity is allowed, so any rule that may exist can more easily be ignored than is perhaps possible in other parts of the language.

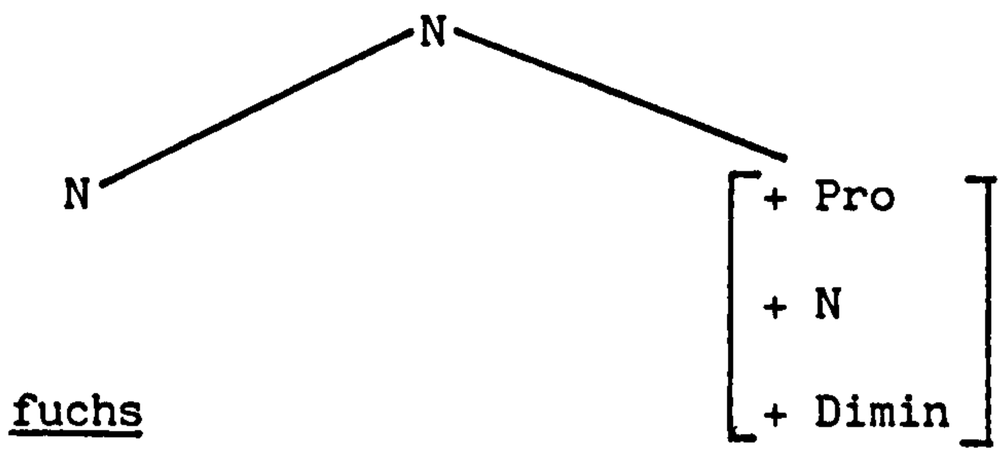
6.3 Diminutive in the Grammar

Ettinger (1980:172) discusses a number of attempts to incorporate diminutives into a transformational model. Even allowing for Ettinger's general objections to TG as a whole, one has to agree with many of his criticisms. The derivation of a synthetic diminutive from an analytic diminutive, for example, is totally unacceptable, whichever way we look at it.[15] In Wurzel's (1970) analysis, a <Dimin> feature is introduced. Wurzel (81), according to Ettinger, presupposes two separate parts of the lexicon:

one for the stress and one for the derivatives, which

> "... sind dort in Form von phonologischen
> Matrizen mit ihren syntaktisch-morphologischen
> und semantischen Merkmalen angegeben."

Thus we find that next to the category features of [+N], [+V] etc. there is a feature [+ Der]. A special lexical insertion rule, restricted by the stem, introduces these derivational elements. A special feature ⟨Pro⟩ can be used to block the application of the normal lexical insertion rule. Thus:



would produce the output Füchslein 'little fox'.

Ileana Vincenz (1969 & 1970) attempts a transformational analysis for Romanian diminutives, but she too derives a synthetic diminutive from an underlying analytic diminutive e.g.:

X	N	Rel.	Aux.	fi	mic	Y	→	X	N	{-aș / -ăligă / -cior / etc.}	Y
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2		7

For augmentative formation, the underlying mic 'small' is replaced by an underlying mare 'large, big' (Vicenz 1969:408). More and more rules and symbols have to be introduced to enable this syntactic model to cope with various morphological and semantic problems. Generative grammar really needed the word formation component, developed mainly subsequent to Chomsky (1970), to be able to cope with something like diminutive formation. Especially relevant in this respect is Aronoff (1976).

6.3.1 Aronoff (1976)

The principle feature of this model is that it is word based:

> "All regular word-formation processes are word-based. A new word is formed by applying a regular rule to a single already existing word. Both the new word and the existing one are members of major lexical categories."
>
> (p.21)

On the whole, this seems to be tenable for diminutive formation in most languages e.g.:

Du.: $[[\text{huis}]_N \quad \text{je}]_N$

Examples which do not conform, such as Du.: meisje (< * meis)[16] and Ger.: Mädchen all seem to be lexicalised. There do not appear to be any languages without such lexicalised diminutives and presumably, in most languages, these would be the first members of any class to which the diminutive suffix cannot be added. This would avoid a word like meisje turning up in $*[[\text{meisje}]_N \quad \text{je}]_N$. As Aronoff (1976:25) predicts, the meaning of the resultant word is indeed a compositional function of the meaning of the input word + diminutive. Where this is not the case, we are again dealing with a lexicalised example, as in Rus: vodka whose meaning is not 'water + Dim'.

Another important part of Aronoff's model are his "truncation rules", and "allomorphy rules". In many languages, diminutive suffixes are added to a shortened or truncated base and this device enables us to do this. In Spanish, for example, a final vowel has often been interpreted as a gender suffix, which would then move to the end of the diminutive suffix e.g. cas-a cas-it-a. However this analysis assumes an element cas-, which does not have a meaning by itself without -a. Besides, caso

is not its masculine counterpart as it has a different meaning altogether. I refer to Jaeggli (1980:152ff) and to 4.3 for a more detailed discussion of this problem. We have, then, pairs such as:

casa - casita, manzana - manzanita

bolso - bolsillo etc.

An allomorphy rule, which would allow these forms to be produced, could be included in the grammar:

$$[[X \quad C_1 \quad V]_{N,A} \quad \begin{Bmatrix}-ill-\\-it-\end{Bmatrix}]_{N,A}$$

$$1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \longrightarrow 1\ 2\ 4\ 3$$

This rule, applying most commonly to nouns and adjectives, shifts the final vowel after at least one consonant to the end of the suffix. Some problems still remain; for example, what about such pairs as guardia - guardiesito (Jaeggli 1980:153), where one member has -o and the other -a? I would be inclined to specify such rare cases somewhere in the lexicon. Note, however, that this rule is not one of Aronoff's truncation rules (1976:40, 88) in that it does not actually delete a morpheme; in fact it is more a phonological rule (but cf. Aronoff 1976:112). Aronoff (1976:114) defines the difference thus:

> "Both types are defined on morphemes, in the environment of morphemes. The only difference is that one deletes morphemes, while the other adjusts their shapes."

It does capture a significant generalisation, which could probably not be expressed as concisely in any other way. Another problem arises where a diminutive suffix is added to a "truncated" compound. Aronoff does not seem to tackle this problem.[17] And yet it occurs in English: grandmother - granny, nightdress - nightie.

There is another question with particular relevance to diminutives. This is the problem of recursiveness. This is of three kinds. First of all, there are those languages with several different diminutive suffixes, which only allow these to accumulate in a specific order. This is the case in Italian and Spanish, among others. In Spanish, for example, -et- is only allowed as the first diminutive suffix and -ín, -ill-, -uch-, -it- cannot occur before -et-. Therefore the rule which adds -et- must occur before those adding any of the other suffixes. Schultink (1974) highlighted the other type of suffix accumulation and this is where one suffix occurs more than once. His data are from Afrikaans: huisietjie, blaartjietjie, stukkietjie etc.[18] This would suggest some sort of cyclical structure whereby the output of the rule can also be the input of that rule in a subsequent rule cycle

$$[[[\text{huis}]_N \text{ ie}]_N \text{ (tj) ie}]_N$$ [19]

It may in fact be easier to analyse -ie and -ietjie as two separate suffixes. At first, this analysis may seem absurd; however, it can be defended on the grounds that -ie is much more productive than -ietjie. -ie, or one of its allomorphs, can be added to virtually any noun, whereas the class of words that has been attested for -ietjie is very small. Within our own terminology, the meaning for -ie could then be given as 'diminutive' and that of -ietjie as 'intensified diminutive'.

Yet another type of suffix-accumulation occurs in Tigrẽ. This is exemplified by:

walat	'girl'
walētat	'girl + Dim'
walatīt	'girl + Dim'
walētatīt	'girl + Dim + Dim'
walētētatīt	
walētētētatīt	etc.
etc.	

Both -at and -īt are feminine diminutive suffixes, but when they are accumulated, they only occur one after the other; -īt follows -at and -at follows -ēt, which does not exist as a diminutive suffix by itself but may occur 'n x' before the double suffix -at-īt and once before -at. Although Littmann does not explain these forms, it seems safe to assume that -ēt is a form (allomorph?) of either -at or -īt or both. One of the effects -at may have is that it changes the vowel <a> to <ē> in the final syllable. This would suggest that -ēt < -at. It would seem, therefore, that -īt only occurs after -at and that it is -at, which is added over and over again by a sort of sub-cycle. We could then give

$$[[X \quad V \quad C]_N \quad -at\ ]_N$$

the ability to apply recursively with the phonological results of the vowel change from the second application onwards, whereas:

$$[[X \quad at]_N \quad -īt\ ]_N$$

could only occur once after -at. All of the above rules seem to be intrinsically ordered, which is in fact what Aronoff (61) predicts. All we have to do is specify for each rule the conditions under which it applies and also how often it may apply, as some rules have the ability to apply recursively, while others can apply only once. Reduplication processes are discussed by

Aronoff (1976:64ff) under the heading "Copying Rules" and his treatment seems adequate for our purposes.

One of the consequences of Aronoff's word-based morphology is that

> ".... the affix (which in most cases is equivalent to the affixing operation) cannot be separated from the rule, because it is nowhere given any representation of its own." (70)

This is easy enough to defend, on the whole. I would, however, like to draw attention to some of the Italian diminutive and pejorative suffixes, which, especially in the dialect of Tuscany, can be used as an independent entity, a word in fact. Hasselrot (1957:235) gives e.g.:

> questo vino e proprio uccio
>
> 'this wine is really bad'
>
> un poderino proprio ino
>
> 'a really small little farm'

The suffixes -uccio and -ino, when used in this way, retain the meaning they have as suffixes; however, they function as separate adjectives. Admittedly these are marginal examples in a sense; however, the fact remains that the connection of ino with -ino is still very clear in the mind of the speaker. The easiest solution might be to give ino/a and uccio/a their own place in the lexicon, but this would ignore the close links between ino/a and -ino/a and uccio/a and -uccio/a.

Another more important problem concerns the following statement by Aronoff (ibid:72):

> "When we encounter a word we have never heard before, one thing we can know pretty much for certain is the syntactic category of the word; ..., since this is the only constant part of the WFR, the only part which is unaffected by the morphology of the base."

We have already seen that this is not the case for diminutives in many languages, where the same suffixes may be used to form diminutives from nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs etc. So it is certainly not by means of the known affix that we can ascertain the lexical categories of Spanish cosita (N), ahorita (Adv), pequeñito (Adj), cinquito (Num) etc.

6.3.2 Booij (1977) and Bauer (1983)

Booij (1977) contains a critique of Aronoff (1976). On the whole Booij seems to accept Aronoff's theory of word formation. The most useful criticism from our point of view is his assertion that:

> "The claim that the base is always a single word, although correct for word-derivation (for which it is presumably intended by Aronoff), is not correct for the two other types of word-formation, compounds and synthetic compounds." (44)

He therefore adds the following general rule to aronoff's model:

> "WF-rules for (synthetic) compounds need more than one basis-word." (45)

Bauer (1983:174-7) also criticises Aronoff's word-based morphology, but his criticisms are much harsher. He too points out that Aronoff does not allow multiple word input to WFRs; he quotes such forms as far-outer and I feel particularly sit-around-and-do-nothing-ish today (175). A more important point, however, is that new words can be derived from units smaller than the word, and he gives examples like Anglophile, biocrat etc. In relation to diminutives we could perhaps add the Dutch word papje from papegaai 'parrot', and English granny; despite this, as Bauer (p.175) points out,

> "the theory is so attractive because it applies in the vast majority of cases"

and this seems to hold even for diminutives.

6.4 Diminutive Suffixes in Standard English

Most of the points discussed in 6.3.2 are relevant to English diminutives, especially when we try to describe the behaviour of the -y/-ie suffix.

6.4.1 -ie/-y

This endearing-diminutive and hypocoristic suffix presents a number of problems. The principal complication is the fact that, in standard English at any rate, it almost always attaches itself only to monosyllabic stems. This condition is so strong that in order for the suffix to be added, large chunks of words can be removed. For any word which conforms to the conditions laid down, the process is reasonably straight-forward:

$$[\,[\,\text{bird}\,]_N \quad \text{y/ie}\,]_N$$

To avoid such forms as *boyie, syllabic information will have to be included. Aronoff (1976:91, 92ff) does allow for this. We could then specify the rule as follows:

$$[\,[C_0 \cdot V \quad C_1]_N \quad \text{y/ie}\,]_N$$

As we pointed out earlier, however, the rule not only applies to words of this form, but words can be reduced to this form for the application of the rule. I draw attention to such forms as:

Catherine	Cathy[20]
sister	sissy
nightdress	nightie

etc.

In the first two examples, one word is reduced to its first closed syllable before the suffix is added,[21] while the third example requires a compound as input, a category seemingly ignored by Aronoff. The compound word is also reduced to its first closed syllable,

the fact that this coincides with the first member of the compound is irrelevant. It is important to note, though, that the whole compound is the input to the rule, which should now perhaps be formulated as:

$$[[C_0 \quad V \quad C_1 \quad X]_N \quad ie/y \quad]_N$$

$$1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5 \quad \rightarrow 1\ 2\ 3\ \emptyset\ 5$$

where X can be anything, including any boundary or the 2nd (and 3rd?) member of a compound.

This is not a truncation rule as the conditions are not specified morphologically. It would have to be considered an allophonic rule as it requires phonological information.

6.4.2 Other Suffixes

The other suffixes are perhaps less complicated. Both -let and -ette are normally attached to nouns only. For -let, any rule would have to include the following conditions:

a. monosyllabic base or compound with monosyllabic final member as base (viz: 6.2.2)

b. the final segment of the base should not be /l/

For -ette the following criteria have to be met:

c. monosyllabic base in /l/

d. otherwise polysyllabic base, provided it ends in a consonant.

It would seem, then, that these two suffixes are in complementary distribution. We could therefore combine them as follows:

$$[[X]_N \quad dim]_N$$

$$dim \rightarrow \text{-ette} \;/\; \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [\$\ X\ \$\ l\ \$]_N \\ [\$\ X\ \$\ Y\ \$\ (Z\$)]_N \end{array} \right\} \underline{\qquad} \quad 22$$

$$dim \rightarrow \text{-let} \qquad \text{all other cases}$$

The main feature of -ette is the fact that it takes primary stress. There are in fact a number of other suffixes in English, that display the same "stress-behaviour" as -ette, which could, therefore, be said to belong to a distinct class of suffixes. Bauer et al. (1980:176-7) list 15 of these "strong suffixes" as they call them. Among them, they list: -ee, -eer, -ese, -esque, -ific etc. In fact, in SPE (Chomsky and Halle 1968:85-86) and especially in Siegel (1979), two distinct classes of suffixes are recognised in English: one that affects stress and receives a + boundary and one that does not affect stress and receives a # boundary. Siegel (p.111ff) calls the former Class I suffixes and the latter Class II suffixes; -ette is obviously a Class I suffix.[23] The main part of Siegel's work is stated on p.152):

A. In English, Class I affixation precedes Class II affixation.

B. The cyclic stress assignment rules follow Class I affixation and precede Class II affixation.

This seems to be the best explanation for the "deviant" stress-behaviour of certain suffixes. Of the English diminutive suffixes, then, $[\text{ino}]_{suf}$ and $[\text{ette}]_{suf}$ [24] are Class I suffixes, but $[\text{Y}]_{suf}$ (or $[\text{ie}]_{suf}$) and $[\text{let}]_{suf}$ are Class II suffixes.

-ino has a very restricted distribution. It can only be attached to nouns whose meaning can be specified as [+ subatomic particle] and even on these, it can hardly be said to be fully productive. In addition, it operates a truncation rule, deleting -on from any base it is attached to:

$$[[\text{root} + \text{on}]_N \quad \text{ino}]_N$$
$$1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \rightarrow 1 \; \emptyset \; 3$$

e.g. neutron > neutrino

It may be restricted to these forms in -on, although a form like ?quarkino does not seem impossible, on linguistic grounds at least.

Footnotes

1. cf. Appendix A, Dutch section.

2. This feature is often used to distinguish two types of vowels in Dutch. The members of these two classes can be arranged in pairs, such that each "covered" vowel has an "uncovered" counterpart:

uncovered	covered
/i/	/I/
/e/	/ɛ/
/a/	/ɑ/
/y/	/œ/
/o/	/ɔ/

This terminology is not entirely satisfactory and an alternative is proposed in Allan and Nieuwenhuis (1985).

3. Although -n still occurs in the orthography, it is not normally realised.

4. For many speakers, including myself, both lotje and lootje are acceptable; cf. also H-L & K (1971:23).

5. /kjə/, /pjə/ etc. are considered to be phonologically conditioned forms of /tjə/.

6. S denotes "any segment or sequence of segments".

7. I use here the representation : to represent a Dutch "long", "tense" or "uncovered" etc. vowel (see also Nieuwenhuis & Allan (1985) for a justification of describing these vowels as "long".

8. cf. Vennemann (1972): "via-rules"; also Hooper (1976).

9. e.g.: Booij (1977:5).

10. See also Bauer (1983:4,5,3).

11. Bauer (1983:92) also quotes this example.

12. Catalān (1958) deals with place-names of a diminutive form; this is quite a separate issue.

13. In Grahame, K. (1908) The Wind in the Willows.

14. The contexts in which these occurred and were collected may be found in Appendix A.

15. This is proposed by Dubois (1969:162-167) among others.

16. But note that meis achieved through back-formation may be used as a form of endearment.

17. Booij (1977) does; see also 6.3.3 below.

18. Cf. also Booij (1977:153).

19. <tj> is added after a vowel or a liquid. For a more detailed explanation, I refer to the Afrikaans section of Appendix A.

20. I will not include such words as Bobby, Jimmy etc. where the suffix is added to a special hypocoristic form. Such forms as Aus.Eng. bullocky use a Scottish form and are therefore also excluded.

21. The same could be said for Elizabeth > Lizzy.

22. We could add an optional truncation rule to produce such forms as: trailer < trailette, tantrum < tantrette.

23. Siegel's model is developed for Dutch by Booij (1977); this work also includes the various diminutive suffixes in Dutch.

24. I am using Siegel's notation here. In Aronoff's (1976:70) model, of course, suffixes only exist as part of a rule and do not have an independent status.

7. Some Diachronic Aspects of Diminutives

7.1 Diminutives in Antiquity

Diminutives are by no means a new phenomenon in the history of language. In fact they have been found in nearly all languages. It is not surprising therefore that we should find diminutives even in the languages of antiquity and even earlier. According to Brugmann (1906 II:669), the suffixes most commonly used with some diminutive sense in Proto- Indo- European were *-(i)io-, *-ino- (-eino-, -oino-), *-lo and *-ko-(-go). The first two were also used to form adjectives from nouns. They were all linked with the sense of 'belonging' and 'similarity'. The rarer form *-isko-, which found its way into Ancient Greek, was also used to form adjectives (Brugmann 1906: 670). The Latin -culo- seems to have been of a more marginal type or it could, perhaps, have been a double suffix consisting of *-ko-lo-. This sort of development is not uncommon in languages. In Sanskrit the -ka suffix had some diminutive sense, although we cannot speak of an actual diminutive system as Whitney (1896:478) explained:

> "Of diminutive suffixes there are none in Sanskrit with clearly developed meaning and use."

There are certainly words, however, where the -ka suffix acts as a diminutive. Whitney (p.476) provides the following examples:

açvaká	'nag'
kanī́naka kumāraká	'boy'
kanīnaká kanī́nikā	'girl'
pādaká	'little foot'
putraká	'little son'
rājaká	'princeling'
çakuntaká	'birdling'

Petersen (1910:155) gives chattra-m 'parasol' chattrāka-m 'mushroom'.

They may be endearing or contemptuous and they may express an objective diminutive. The suffix may also be used to form adjectives.

7.1.1 Ancient Greek

In ancient Greek, two diminutive suffixes were used, -ιον and -ισκο-/-ισκη- (-ion and -isko-/-iski-); -ion was the most common diminutive suffix. As well as being diminutive, it had a number of other uses. It could be used as a nominalising suffix and it carried the sense of 'belonging to', 'connected with' and 'coming from'. There are also a few words in -ion referring to the young of animals e.g.: ὄρνις 'bird' ὀρνίθιον 'young bird' (Petersen 1910:61). In addition to these, Petersen (1910) lists the following meaning areas for this suffix:

- 'made of', 'consisting of'
- 'possession' or 'provided with'
- 'belonging to the category or idea of', 'having the nature of'
- 'likeness'

As a diminutive, it expresses small size, contempt or endearment e.g. ἅμαξα 'heavy wagon', ἁμάξιον 'little wagon' (Petersen 1910:133-158), and also:

παῖς	'child'	παιδίον	'infant, baby'
νῆσος	'island'	νησίον	'little island'
ψακάς	'rain'	ψαχάδιον	'drizzle'

Contempt for other cities was often shown by the citizens of Athens by referring to these places as πολίχνιον 'little city' (Petersen

1910:114). Modesty is expressed in ἀγαλμάτιον 'a little gift' (162). All -ion words have the neuter gender, which in itself is quite a widespread phenomenon (see 3.9.2). From the diminutive meaning of -ion, a number of other connoted meanings developed. Petersen (1910:160-61) lists the following: youth, descent, tenderness, deliciousness, luxury, elegance, thinness, slenderness. It can also be used to refer to a short period of time, to refer to a part of a larger phenomenon, a small quantity, something of little value etc. The same suffix is also used to form hypocoristics. There is some evidence that there were diminutive forms which had already lost their diminutive sense, as Petersen (1910:167) explains. These could then form a new diminutive, thus becoming a double diminutive in form, though not probably in meaning.

The other suffix, -isko- or -iski- was rarer, though as old as -ion. In earlier times it was confined to the non-Aeolic dialects as Petersen (1913:141) points out. This suffix does not affect gender and it was used to form diminutives, pejorative-diminutives and hypocoristics. According to Brugmann Grundriss 2.1, the oldest use of this suffix was to form adjectives with a sense of 'approximating the condition designated by the primitive'.[1] About the relative use of the two suffixes, Petersen (1913:156) states that

> "In the Lyric age -ισκο- was the diminutive suffix, and -ιον had not yet developed, while in the Alexandrian age -ιον was the diminutive suffix par excellence, and left to -ισκο- its most characteristic function of designating similarity..."

The pejorative meaning of this suffix may be related to its sense of 'similarity' and hence of 'lower quality than the real thing' rather than to its diminutive sense, although a diminutive sense may be implied, e.g.: ἀνθρωπίσκος 'wretched little manikin' (Petersen 1913:169). Even when it is used as a diminutive, the notions of similarity and relatedness are often still present.

Petersen (1913:173) gives e.g.: αὐλός '(large) flute', αὐλίσκος 'small kind of flute'; ναΐσκος 'a shrine' (i.e. 'a small temple'). Words designating the young of animals may also be found by means of -isko- as in δελφινίσκος 'a little or young dolphin'. -isko- too could be used to form hypocoristics e.g.: Ἡρακλίσκος (Petersen p.193); and like -ion it had connotations of softness, elegance, delicateness etc. Thus when used with edible animals, it often had the meaning of 'tender' as in χαιρίσκος 'a tender little boar' (176).

7.1.2 Latin

In Latin the suffixes -lo- (or -lus) and -culo- (-culus) were used for diminutive; these suffixes, especially in the earlier period, also served to express the sense of belonging, similarity etc. The -lo/a suffix had in addition a function as a 'female' marker (cf. Hakamies 1951:14). When used on adjectives they usually had an attenuating sense and when used with colour-terms, they correspond to Eng. -ish e.g.:

rufulus, rubellus 'redish'

nigellus 'blackish' (Hakamies 1951;15)

The sense of 'belonging' and 'likeness, similarity' still survived in such pairs as caput 'head', capitulum 'top part of a column',

iocus 'game' ioculus 'toy' etc.

Proper diminutives are frequently found in the literature, especially that by the more popular authors. Hakamies (p.22) quotes the following lines from Plautus:

Dic igitur me(a) anticulam,
columbulam, catellum,
Hirundinem, monerulam, passerculum putillum.

These literary examples are probably not typical of the language as a whole. In many cases diminutives were probably used to facilitate conformity to the metre, a phenomenon also recognised by Polzin (1901) in OHG and MHG (see 2.4). Latin diminutives could be both objective and subjective, pejorative or endearing. Some diminutives developed a specialised meaning, thus according to Hakamies (p.24), bestiola lit. 'little animal' came to mean 'insect'. Names of various types of pastry often had a diminutive form e.g.: savillum, gratilla and also names of flowers, birds etc. In the early Romance period, diminutives became more commonly used, often replacing the base word from which they were derived. This tendency has sometimes been exaggerated and Hakamies (p.43) puts it in perspective with the following statistics. Of 1128 diminutives found in Latin,

in ... 421	both diminutive and non-diminutive have disappeared
420	diminutive has disappeared, whereas the non-diminutive survives
32	the non-diminutive disappeared while the diminutive survived
255	both diminutive and non-diminutive have survived - into the modern Romance languages

There does seem to have been a tendency - analysed by Widstrand (1926), Nyström (1926) and Anderson (1938) - to use the diminutive and non-diminutive forms side by side with a seemingly equivalent meaning. Thus such pairs as cauliculus - caulis, arbusculae - arabores, auricula - auris, coronula - corona etc. seem to have been in free variation. Hakamies (1951:48) believes that this was

> "... une certaine affectation de la langue populaire, où les diminutifs à coup sûr dans un bon nombre de cas étaient des sortes de doublets des primitifs, mais, comme il paraît, d'un caractère moins stabilisé la plupart du temps."

This, coupled with the fact that the synthetic diminutive was more often than not - especially since Terence and Plautus - accompanied by an analytic diminutive, led to many diminutives losing their diminutive force. Many of these forms do survive in the modern Romance dialects, however. For example the following.

Auricula	It. orecchio, Sp. oreja etc.
Dominicellus-a	Fr. damoiselle
Agnellus	Fr. agneau
Lusciniolus, rusciniolus	Oc. rosinhol
Apicula	Fr. abeille, Sp. abeja
Robullus	Sp. roble
Cereola	Sp. ciruela etc.

7.2 A Brief Survey of Diminutives in Romance

Although many Latin diminutives survived in Romance, new and separate diminutives developed as well. Let us first of all consider Spanish and Portuguese. The Latin diminutive suffixes -culus and -lus survive in the regional Portuguese suffixes involving -lh- or -l-. Otherwise they have disappeared. The -ellus/-illus suffix which, according to Maurer (1959:256), was a diminutive intensifier in Vulgar Latin, survives in Portuguese -ela (cf. Nunes 1945:381). The more common -in-, -inh- and -ín suffixes find their origin in a Latin -inu- suffix, which was used to form adjectives referring to 'origin'. In this function it survives in Italian e.g.: fiorentino, levantino and in Spanish e.g.: mallorquín 'from or of Mallorca', vizcaíno 'from or of Vizcaya' etc. It has become a diminutive suffix in Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, Italian, Rhaetoromance and takes the form -in/-ín in Spanish, Gascon - Béarnais, Franco-Provençal, Italian and Rhaetic dialects; -inh-/-iñ- in Portuguese and Gallego (Galician).

The other common suffixes -it- and -ic- are not of Latin origin (cf. Nunes 1945:387; Menéndez Pidal 1940:234 and Hasselrot 1957). Menéndez Pidal (1940) gives for -it- 'origen oscuro'. Hasselrot (1957) argues for all -tt- suffixes, of which this is one, being of Gaulish origin. This also includes -et- in Catalan, Occitan, French, Italian and Rhaetoromance. All these forms developed from -ĭttu/-ītu. The suffix -ottu/-ŏt in Occitan comes from the Gaulish suffix -ottu according to Hasselrot (1957), whereas French -ot(te)/-at/-œt etc. developed from -ittu. About -ico (-iccu) Menéndez Pidal(1940:234) states "no es de origen latino". Maurer (1959:253-4) does list "-iccus/-icca(?)" as diminutive suffixes for Vulgar Latin; however he does explain that -icca or -ica often occurred in female personal names, especially in Africa e.g.: Bodicca, Bonica, Karica. He admits that there are problems about this suffix and whether it really is the ancestor of modern Ibero-Romance -ic-, Romanian -ică etc. is uncertain. The Occitan diminutive suffixes -on, -ou etc. come from a Vulgar Latin pejorative-augmentative suffix -o(-one). It retains the older sense in most Romance languages e.g.: Sp. mujerona 'a great big ugly woman'. The Vulgar Latin suffix -uceus survives as a diminutive suffix in Southern Italian -ucce, in Sard,and in Romanian -uţă and -uţ (Maurer p.253). The diagram summarises this brief survey of the origin of the Romance diminutive suffixes:

ORIGIN	FORM	MEANING	MODERN FORMS
Latin	-(cu)lus	diminutive	-ilho, -elho, -alho
	-ellus/-illus	diminutive intensifier	-ela, -elo, -ellu
	-īnu (adjectival)	'originating from', 'belonging to'	-inho, -iño -ino, -inu, -ín, -in
Vulgar Latin	-uceus (adjectival)	'similarity'	-ucce, -uţă, -uţ
	-o(-one)	pejorative-augmentative	-on, -ou, -(ih)oun
Celtic (Gaulish)	-ittu/-īttu	hypocoristic	-et(te), -ot(te) etc. -ittu, -ito, -et(e), -etto, -ettu
	-ottu	hypocoristic-'immature'	-ottu, -ðt, -ot, -wetu -at(te)
	-attu	'immature'	-atto, -at(tu), -ato, -at(te)
? ?	-iccu	female hypocoristic?	-ico, -ică

In conclusion we can say that the Classical Latin diminutive has virtually disappeared. Elements from the semantic fields of 'belonging' and 'origin' combined with hypocoristic suffixes and diminutive intensifiers to form the modern diminutives. It is perhaps interesting to note that the much rarer augmentative suffix has continued virtually intact from Vulgar Latin, albeit that in a few dialects it has become diminutive.

7.3 A Brief Survey of Diminutives in Germanic

In Germanic there were a number of different suffixes which have provided the diminutive morphemes in the modern languages. The main suffixes were of 3 types reflected by the following Gothic forms:

(a) -ula(m), -ilo (f, n)

(b) -ika

(c) -īn (König 1978:157)

(c) combined with the other two to form two distinct suffix types, which, although known throughout the Germanic languages, have each come to dominate a specific area. In OHG -ilo remained and formed a feminine -ilâ (Grimm 1831:666). Both gave way to a neuter -(i)li suffix. During the MHG period, this split into Austro-Bavarian -ele, -le, -el >-(e)l, while the Alemannic dialects developed -(e)lî > -li, -le (Grimm:670-74). According to Grimm (1832:672-3), it was the nominative form -(e)lîn that led to -lein from the 13th century onwards, although most recent authors like Van Loey (1970:226), König (1978:157) and Hofmann (1961) agree on a combination of the L-suffix with -īn, which was an adjectival suffix denoting 'belonging'. This suffix was also used with materials, denoting 'made of', in which sense it is found on e.g.: Eng. golden, wooden, etc. It also came to be used with animal names as an <immature> suffix (Van Loey 1970:226). This sense was generalised to a diminutive and hypocoristic and in this latter sense, it is still found in some of the southern dialects of Dutch. -lein then came to dominate the HG area. It was found elsewhere too; -lîn occurs occasionally in Middle Dutch poetry, possibly through MHG influence, but various isolated forms survive in Low German and North Frisian (cf. Hofmann 1961).

On the whole the Dutch, Frisian and Low German area are dominated by the K-forms, which first became established in Franconian. These suffixes were also used in English, especially in the north, where they survive in some areas to this day. The K-suffixes formed hypocoristics at least as early as the 4th century A.D. They came to form diminutives of names of animals, plants and certain objects. It was also used on verbs and here, O.E. lTðercian 'to soften' (c. 730) is the oldest known example (Hofmann 1961: 122). O.E. bull > bulluc N.E. bullock is a noun with this suffix. Two forms developed in English -ick and -ock and both survive in various dialects (viz. Rotzoll 1910) and are still productive in the forms -ikie (-ick + -ie) and -ock (-ie) in the North East of Scotland. this was the most common diminutive suffix in Older Scots (12th to 17th century). It could be that Gaelic -ag, which is still used in this form in Caithness Scots, contributed to the popularity of the K-suffix in Scots. In Middle Dutch the suffix appears as -kijn (< -ekijn < *-ikin < *-ik + īn). This suffix was borrowed by English in the form -kin and enjoyed some productivity in Middle English, Elizabethan English and Older Scots. It remains productive to this day in some dialects, notably Buchan Scots. In Dutch -kin > -ken>-ke in some of the modern dialects. The same suffix -kijn also led to modern Dutch -(t)je. Possibly under the influence of Frisian, the /k/ palatalised before the front high vowel. This phenomenon spread from the North of Holland and various intermediate forms have been found in written sources.[2] In N. Holland there is -tgin(-tgen) > -gien > -tje. Because no assimilation of voice occurs in such forms as korfje, snuifje etc. it is generally assumed that -je < -tje (Van Loey 1970:229). In S. Holland and Zeeland the intermediate forms -tiaen (> -tje) and -iaen /-jaen (> -je) as well as -kiaen (> -kje) have been found.

The form -ie developed in the 17th century in certain western dialects and it is this suffix that was taken to the new colony at the Cape. -ke is also found in Frisian, often in one of its palatalised forms. Both versions occur as -k(i) and -tj(i) in North Frisian. In Low German -ke(n) is the dominant suffix, although L-forms do exist. -chīn, next to kīn, has been found in Central Germany since the 9th and 10th centuries, especially on personal names. This has survived as -chen and has become the dominant suffix in Standard German.

A number of other suffix-types are used in Germanic. First of all there is the S-type, used in Scandinavian languages and discussed in the Danish and Icelandic sections of Appendix A. In Danish it takes the form -s(e) and in Icelandic it is found as -si, -sa, combined with an L-suffix in -sli, -sla, and combined with an N-suffix in -sni, -sna. This same S-type survives as a marginal suffix in German, Dutch, Frisian and English.

Even though it is used in Modern Dutch on such forms as mams, paps etc., an S-suffix entered Old Dutch and combined with -īn to form -sîn. This suffix was used for hypocoristic formation in Old Dutch. It combined with -kijn in Middle Dutch to form -skijn > -ske(n) which is found in certain environments in a number of dialects, especially those of Brabant e.g.:

huukske < hoek 'corner'

meiske 'girl'

jungske 'little boy' < jong 'boy, child'

(for vowel mutation see Dutch Section Appendix A)

Another suffix which deserves a mention is Old Saxon -(l)ing which was originally a patronymic suffix denoting origin or, with materials,

'made of' etc. It became an 'immature' suffix in O N. and in English and developed a more general diminutive sense from there. It has become virtually non-productive in English and survives as an 'immature' suffix for children and animals in Icelandic in the forms -lingur, -lingi, -lungur. The suffix -ing is still fully productive in a large area in North Germany (now in GDR). Considering this from a synchronic point of view, we could actually speak of a Germanic N-suffix embracing eastern Dutch -ien, Icelandic -ng- and -n- (-ni, -na, -ini) and the -(l)ing suffixes. However they are not all related.

Another fairly widespread suffix-type in Germanic is that consisting of a vowel. Two major types exist - those in /-i/ and those in /-o/. Diminutives in -i occur in OHG e.g.: magati 'girl', fugili 'little bird' (Grimm : 683) and this type survives in Swiss German Äugi 'eye + dim', füessi 'foot + dim' etc. The Dutch -ie suffix, as we have seen, is a more recent development. Icelandic -i is used for hypocoristics, as it was in ON. This is also to some extent the case in Dutch and German, where hypocoristics and kinship forms may be formed with /-i/ e.g.:

Du.: pappie, mammie

Ger.: Vati, mutti, Heini, Uli etc.

In Standard English -ie/-y is primarily a hypocoristic suffix, with the usual extensions into kinship terms, domestic animals and children's language. Its origin lies in Scots, where hypocoristics of the form Davie are recorded from the 15th century onwards. Over the centuries -ie has taken over from -ock as the most popular diminutive suffix in Scots as its meaning became more general. It is well established now over most of Scotland having pushed

the K-suffixes into the North-East and South-West corners of the nation.[3] According to Marchand (1969:298) the hypocoristic sense of the suffix arose through the symbolic value of the vowel (cf. Chapter 5).[4] The -o suffix is found in English (boyo, Robbo), in German (Heino) and formerly in Frisian and Saxon (Sicco). In Icelandic, -o is a recent suffix largely restricted to colloquialisms. Grimm (1831:691ff) has found OHG examples with this suffix from the 10th century onwards, always with hypocoristics, which is still its function today. He gives the following examples among others:

Landefredus	Lanzo	(985 A.D.)
Teupaldus	Teuzo	(995 A.D.)

Sometimes it is found with animal names: snecko 'snail'.
It is clear from the examples that -o is often used together with the hypocoristic suffix -z. Similarly in Frisian and Saxon the -o was normally accompanied by a geminate consonant.

There are also a few loans from other language families among the Germanic diminutive suffixes. All of these seem to occur in English. Thus Anglo-Irish has borrowed -een from Irish -ín, Caithness Scots uses Scottish Gaelic -ag and Standard English uses -ette fairly productively. The latter was borrowed from French and according to Marchand (1969:289ff) became productive in the 19th century. Its use as a 'female' suffix dates back to the early years of this century with such forms as suffragette (1906). It is exceptional among Germanic suffixes in taking primary stress, adopted with the suffix from French. Similarly -een normally takes stress, but Irish -ín is also exceptional in Celtic for taking primary stress.[5] Marchand (p.269) gives girleen as the only example without stressed -een; perhaps its frequent use has led to its conforming

to English stress. The English suffix -let derives from French, according to the OED. Marchand (1969:326-7) explains that from an increase in productivity as a diminutive suffix in Elizabethan times it has been gaining in popularity ever since. He does say that "Words denoting animals are not very numerous". I have found the opposite to be the case. The suffix -let enjoys a special popularity among zoologists as an 'immature' suffix, as is supported by such examples as froglet, toadlet, newtlet, etc. (see also English section Appendix A).

7.3.1 The Origin of the Yiddish Diminutive Suffixes

Yiddish deserves special attention because the origin of its diminutive system has not been clearly set out before. Most of this section deals with the North-Eastern dialect (henceforth NEY), which enjoyed prolonged contact with Slavic languages. In addition the origin of the suffixes should throw some light on the dialectal origin of the language itself. The suffixes whose birthplace we are looking for, -(e)le, -l, -lex, must have originated somewhere in the High German area, where the L-type diminutive dominates, even if we recognise that the modern situation is not the same as that which prevailed when Yiddish adopted these suffixes. The -l suffix dominates in the Austro-Bavarian dialects and the -le/-la/-li dominates in Alemannic-Franconian, as far north as the Thüringerwald. -el also occurs. It is dominant in a small area which includes southern Alsace and a small region, across the border in Germany, to the NE of it. Another -el area covers the Sudetenland and parts of NE Bavaria, around Regensburg. It occurs as a secondary suffix in Bavarian, as we shall see below. Bremer (1895:22) states that the L suffixes must have extended at least as a secondary type

much further north than they do now and this is borne out by the fact that even Middle Dutch used the -lîn suffix (cf. Van Loey 1970: 226; Grimm 1931: 676). Weinreich (1980: 451) seems to overlook this fact when he states that:

> "In the largest part of east-central German the diminutives end in the type -chen, not the type -lein, whereas in eastern Yiddish mostly l suffixes are used to form the diminutive."

Clearly the modern situation is different from that 1000 or even 500 years ago (see 7.3). If we accept this, then there is no doubt that L was the diminutive marker throughout most of the area which the Jews called Loter (see map), especially if we extend it to include Regensburg, as Max Weinreich (1980:1) suggests. That Yiddish should have adopted two versions of this suffix is not surprising. Many languages use more than one version of a suffix type. Weinreich (p.514) believes that the two suffixes -l and -(e)le were borrowed separately from the two dialects:

> "The two subtypes of the L suffix, which in German are differentiated areally between Bavarian-Austrian and Alemannic, namely -l and -le, are both reflected in the German component of Yiddish and have received different functions."

Despite this, he himself states that in Older Yiddish -lin was widely used (445). Clearly this same suffix must have led to both -l and -le, as it did in German.

It has been suggested that the two-stage diminutive system in Yiddish must have been inspired by Slavic (cf. U.Weinreich 1958:380); M.Weinreich 1980: 531/2). Austro-Bavarian, however, also seems to have this sytem, using the same forms as NEY, namely -l(e) for diminutive and -el(e) for diminutive intensifier. Both Landau (1896/7:51,57) and Wrede (1908:79) mention this fact. Keller (1961) even gives such systems for Lower Alsace and Darmstadt.

If it existed when Yiddish originated - and there is no evidence either for or against - it was perhaps reinforced by the favourable Slavic environment it subsequently moved into. This would point clearly to an Austro-Bavarian origin of the NEY diminutives. The other dialects which do not have this system must have collected their suffixes elsewhere. The L-suffix based system was taken east with the Jewish migrations. Those Jews who remained in Loter and especially those who spread northwards from there, increasingly came in contact with the Dutch and Low German K suffixes. These have spread so far south that most of what used to be L-dominated Loter has become K-dominated (especially the -chen suffix). This west Yiddish community, which remained in daily contact with other Germanic dialects, readily adopted the suffixes from German and Dutch, especially as the larger and more influential Jewish communities had now become established in the north; Hamburg, Amsterdam, etc. That these WY communities were always ready to assimilate elements from the surrounding languages is clear from the fact that by the beginning of this century many of these Yiddish dialects had become virtually indistinguishable from the languages around them (cf. Voorzanger and Polak 1974:16-24 for Dutch Yiddish). The Yiddish dialect of Alsace, which is still largely in L-territory, has retained the L suffixes, but has apparently never adopted (or lost ?) the two-stage system. This would again suggest an Austro-Bavarian or at least Eastern origin for the 2-stage system (cf. Zuckerman 1969:56 for Alsace Yiddish).

At first sight, the plural diminutive suffix -lex seems more puzzling. Lass (1979:9 and pers. comm.) suggests that it might be related to the Slavic locative plural suffix; -ax in Polish, -ex in Czech. Weinreich (1980:702), however lists it with the suffixes that are

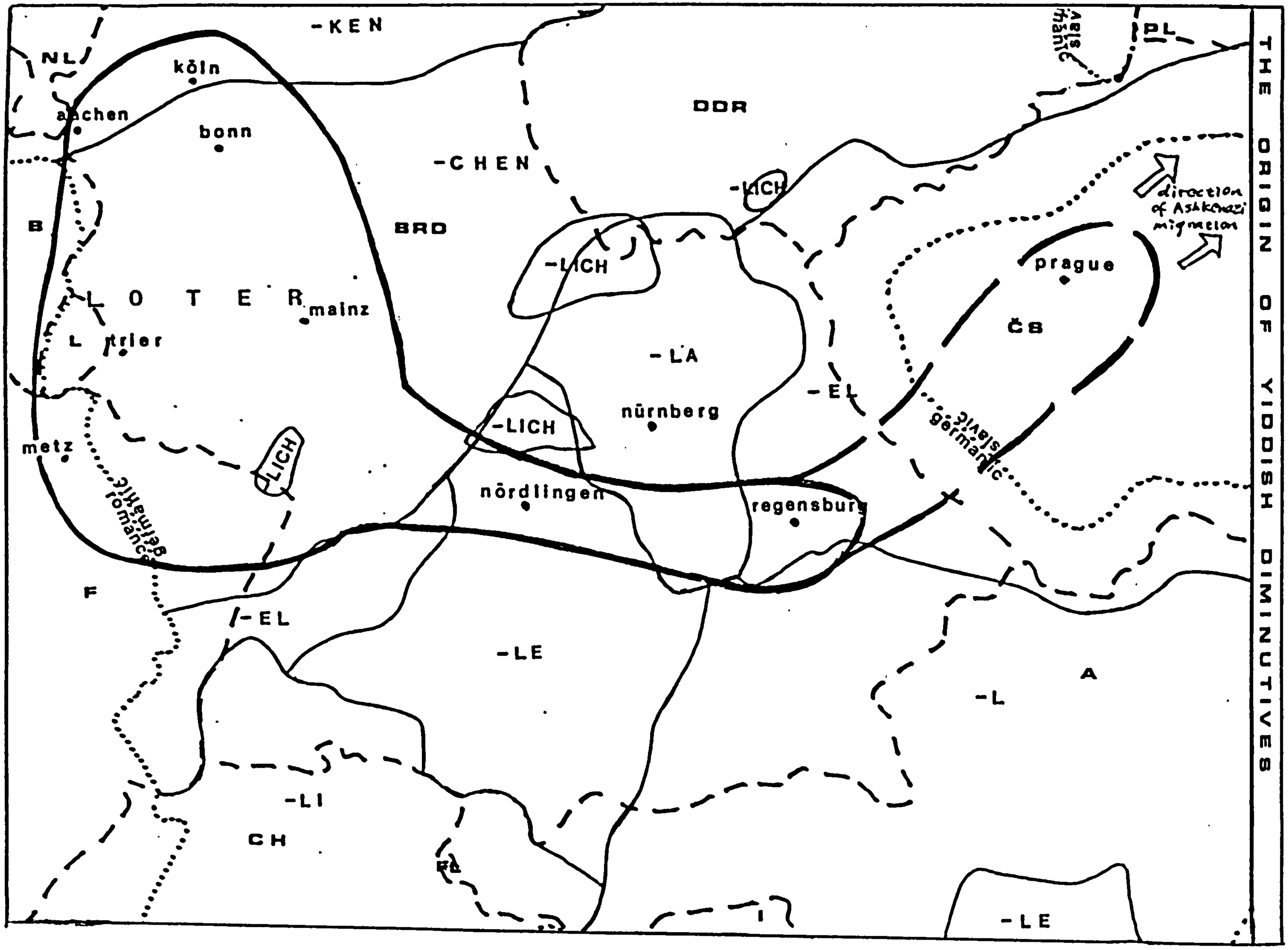
definitely of Germanic origin, although he does not actually explain where and how it originated. It seems that the origin of this suffix must be sought in the MHG suffix -lach. Grimm (1831:674/5 and footnote) mentions the following example found in a work by Hans Sachs (15th C): keplach, and from letters to the mystic Margarethe Ebner (1291-1351): messerlach, kerzlach, tischlach. Grimm adds that in his own days in parts of Frankenland bublach could still be heard instead of bŭblein. Landau (1896/7:51-56) also traces the history of this suffix, while Wrede (1908:120, 122, 124, 126) interprets it as a collective suffix. This combined with the diminutive became a diminutive plural marker. He analyses the suffix as a combination of L + K suffixes. Wrede also states that it was once used over most of the High German area (p.126), so presumably including most of Loter. It survived in Wrede's time - and may still do so - in four areas in the form -lich (see map). This would suggest a sound-change from -lach, through -lech, which was adopted by Yiddish, to -lich (could this be influenced by sound symbolism?; cf. Chapter 5 and 7.5). It is of course possible that the sound-change happened independently in German and Yiddish.[6] Landau too (1896/7:57-8) seems unsure about the sequence of events in this case. Even if the suffix was not as widespread as Wrede suggests the areas in which it survived into this century and those for which there is historical evidence - Nürnberg, where Sachs worked and Nördlingen, where "Ebnerin" lived - are close enough to Loter to have been able to supply Yiddish with its suffix.[7] It is interesting to note that Alsace Yiddish uses the modern form of the suffix, namely -liç.[8] (Zuckerman 1969:56). We have then been able to find a wholly German origin for the Yiddish diminutive system. There are some Slavic elements, though.

The -ink- infix is Slavic. It is used in Russian (cf. Appendix A) to form diminutive adjectives. The -nju suffix of children's language is also of Slavic origin.

The table below sets out the origin of the various suffixes in Yiddish.

Fig. 7.1 : Sources of the Yiddish Diminutives

German & Dutch		Yiddish	
Dialects	Forms	Forms	Dialect
Dutch & Low German	-ke(n) -che(n) -je -tje	-(t)ye -še	West- & Central & South-East
		-(l)çe/-(l)çer	
East Franconian & Alemannic	-lach -lech -lich -le -la	-(e)liç -(e)le	Switzerland & Alsace
Austro-Bavarian	-l	-lech -lach -loch[9] -(e)le -l	NEY
	2-stage dim. system	2-stage dim. system[10]	
Slavic			
	-nju -ink- etc. 2-stage dim. system	-nju -ink etc.[11] (2-stage dim. system)[12]	NEY


-KEN
NL
köln
aachen
bonn
DDR
-CHEN
-LICH
BRD
B
direction of Ashkenazi migration
prague
-LICH
L O T E R
mainz
trier
ČS
-LA
-EL
nürnberg
-LICH
metz
germanic
slavic
romance
-LICH
nördlingen
regensburg
F
-EL
-LE
A
-L
-LI
CH
-LE
THE ORIGIN OF YIDDISH DIMINUTIVES

7.4 The Origin of Diminutives

Many diminutivists try and speculate on the origin of diminutives in general and most of them suggest that the origin of diminutives is somehow linked with morphs expressing the notions of 'similarity', 'belonging' and 'origin' in the widest sense. Such speculations seem to carry a tacit assumption that there was a time when languages had no diminutives at all, which is not borne out by the evidence. Not only do most - if not all - languages have diminutives, the same also seems to have been the case in languages that are now extinct. It seems safe to assume that languages have always had some way of referring to small objects and some way of expressing endearment or contempt. It also seems likely that in many cases these two areas were combined to form what we now understand as diminutives. There is, however, overwhelming evidence - some of it presented in the first half of this chapter - to suggest that many of our present-day diminutive morphemes find their origin in other semantic areas. We can only speculate on why this need for "new" diminutives arose.

As we shall see in section 7.6, diminutives are subject to fashion. They are more popular during some periods of the history of a language than in others, whereupon - either by a deliberate effort (as in French), or by a sort of speech-community consensus - a reaction against them reduces their popularity again. We could then imagine a scenario whereby diminutives either become so popular that they lose their diminutive force - and there are plenty of examples of this - or they become so unpopular that they are deliberately removed from the language; something which almost happened in standard French (cf. Chapter 1, 1.2). In either case a language would be in danger of being left without diminutives; a situation

that clearly has to be rectified and morphemes from other, related areas - i.e. those areas outlined in Chapter 3 - can move into the vacuum. Let us therefore briefly consider each of the areas that have supplied diminutives.

7.4.1 The Concept of 'Origin'

If we consider the concept of 'origin' in its widest sense it includes the following areas.

(a) Origin from a particular ancestor; i.e. the area of patronyms.

(b) Origin from a particular place.

(c) Made of a specific material.

(d) Origin in any other real or perceived sense.

(a) Examples of patronymic suffixes or suffixes referring to genetic origin which have come to be used as diminutive suffixes are not uncommon. The Germanic suffix -(l)ing is such a suffix, as we have seen in 7.3 above. In Slavic such diminutive suffixes as Czech -ček still have a patronymic sense, now largely lexicalised, on such family names as Dubček, Janaček, etc. For Latvian, Rūķe-Draviņa (1959:401) lists -ītis, -ēns and -elis as suffixes which even now share some sense of origin with the primary diminutive sense. These three examples show three stages between the syncretism of diminutive and patronymic and the final loss of the latter sense. More examples may be found in 3.6.

(b) The sense of 'originating from a place' cannot actually be pinpointed as the original sense of any of the suffixes in our data. There are, however many examples which share this

sense with that of diminutive. In section 7.2 we saw examples of -ino and -ín - whose ancestor -inu referred to origin in general - still being used to denote origin from a place, as in Italian fiorentino '(person) from Florence', Sp. mallorquín '(person) from Mallorca'. The diminutive prefixes in Bantu also serve the purpose of denoting 'origin from a place' in some cases, although more usually in the sense of 'belonging or appertaining to' that place.

(c) The sense 'made of' was shared by the Germanic -(l)ing suffix, as in silabarlinc 'made of silver' used to denote a silver coin. This sense was also present in Gothic -īn and as such survives in English wooden, golden, Du. -en in gouden, houten, etc., which is quite productive, and in German. This suffix combined with others to form diminutive suffixes. The Greek suffix -ion also had 'made of' as one of its many meanings. (cf. Petersen 1910: Chapter X).

(d) Many suffixes still do or once did combine all of the above in a more general sense of origin. In Basque for example, according to Estornes Lasa (1967:56) a large number of diminutive suffixes also have the meaning of 'son of', 'shoot, sprout, bud or offspring of' or even anything which could be said to originate from something. In Chapter 3 we saw that the Tibetan -bu suffix too covered these areas of meaning, although its original meaning is another one, as we shall see below (7.4.4).

7.4.2 Belonging - Relatedness - Similarity

This could be seen as a more general sense of the above and while in 7.4.1 we did not find much evidence of one sense actually leading to a diminutive sense, here the evidence is overwhelming.

Synchronically we can still find syncretism of the sense of 'belonging' and diminutive in Latvian -iņš and other suffixes. Keller (1961:82) explains that the verbal diminutive suffix -ele in Swiss German "... expresses also something connected with the basic word". We find the same with Tibetan -bu and many other affixes in our data. Rūķe-Draviņa (1959:400-401) states that ...

> "In den idg. Sprachen ist es der Begriff der Zugehörigkeit und der Ähnlichkeit, der sich in den meisten diminutiven Suffixen als der ursprüngliche feststellen lässt; ..."
> (see also Hasselrot 1957:301ff).

In Vulgar Latin the suffix -uceus referred to similarity. This suffix now forms diminutives in some modern Romance dialects. -īnu expressed 'belonging' as well as 'origin'. Gothic -īn also expressed belonging, as did both Ancient Greek -isko and -ion. I have not found any evidence of the same diachronic development in other language families.

7.4.3 Hypocoristic

Synchronically many diminutive affixes can be used to form hypocoristics. Most languages do however have hypocoristic formation which cannot be used to form diminutives. Nevertheless there is evidence of hypocoristic suffixes generalising into a diminutive use.

Rūķe-Draviņa (1959) continues the quotation given above as follows:

> "... auch manche Endungen kosender Kurznamenformen sind später zu Diminutivsuffixen geworden;"

According to Hasselrot (1957) this was the case with the suffix -ittus. Nearly all the examples of this suffix found in Latin are names, mostly female, in -itta, -itto, -ittus, e.g. Atitta, Julitta, Pollitta, etc. He therefore concludes that "On ne risque pas de se tromper en supposant que ces surnoms avaient, au moins

à l'origine, un caractère hypocoristique." This may also have been true for iccu. In Older Scots the suffix -ie started off as a hypocoristic suffix, which subsequently developed a more general diminutive meaning. As a result it could challenge the supremacy of the -ock suffix - which itself started off as a hypocoristic (cf. 7.3) - in Scotland and even became the most popular endearing suffix in Standard English.[13] The -s and -o suffixes in Germanic languages are also primarily hypocoristic, e.g. Ger. Heino, Du. Jans. The first words other than personal names to be affected are kinship terms and names of domestic animals[14] and these have already been affected by -s in most Germanic languages, less so by -o. Only in Danish and possibly Icelandic, has -s become a proper diminutive suffix. -o, when used in Eng. boyo is still used for persons, but seems to be confined to specific lexical items, especially in Welsh English. In Semitic by far the greatest number of diminutives are hypocoristics, a fact that might suggest a hypocoristic origin for its diminutives in general.

7.4.4 Immature

A number of suffixes referring to the young of animals have developed a more general diminutive meaning.

Petersen (1910:61-2) when discussing the Greek suffix -ion explains that

> "From the use of a suffix to denote the young of animals a diminutive meaning may easily develop; for the young are at the same time small, and the notion of small size, though at first accessory, might become dominant."

In fact our data contain only one language, Ngiyambaa, which has a completely separate 'immature' suffix. In many other languages we have encountered suffixes that are primarily used to denote

small animals, but they can also form diminutives from certain words. The suffix -attu probably started life as a specialised 'immature' suffix and - although still used in this sense in most Romance dialects - it can now also be used with a more general diminutive sense.

7.4.5 From a Noun meaning 'child', 'son'

According to Hasselrot (1957:301),

> "... c'est de la famille 'fils', 'enfant', 'petit de' que provient le morphème diminutif qui, selon toute probabilité, a le plus souvent servi dans les langues du monde. Les substantifs mentionnés ont perdu assez de leur contenu sémantique pour se transformer en simples morphèmes, signifiant seulement 'petit' avec, éventuellement, évocation supplémentaire d' affectivité"

The fact that nouns become bound morphemes is perhaps not as surprising as Hasselrot seems to suggest if we imagine compounds as an intermediate stage. The best example in our data for a noun meaning 'child' or 'son' becoming a diminutive suffix is in Tibetan, where bu as a noun still means 'son' or 'child'. We could regard the extensive semantic generalisation of -bu as an early stage on the path to becoming a proper diminutive suffix. In this case we could imagine a development whereby initially the noun becomes a suffix which can be used to link as it were any word to which it is attached with any number of meanings that are felt to be implied by the word for 'child' or 'son'. These would include 'origin', 'relatedness', 'similarity', 'smallness', 'youth', 'endearment', etc. In fact very much the situation which prevails in Tibetan. Subsequent specialisation of meaning could lead to a more specific diminutive suffix. The Nahuatl suffix -pil also originates in a word meaning 'child'. In Southern Bantu a number of languages have developed diminutive suffixes. These suffixes too come from a noun meaning 'child'.

The noun is wana in Tekeza, wuana in Matonga, u-nuana in Man?olosi, umuntwana in Zulu and ŋuana in Seɓapi. The suffix usually takes the form -(ay) ana. Rūķe-Draviņa (1959:401), who treats the various origins of suffixes in some detail also suggests a development via compounding: "... ausserdem gibt es Suffixe, die anfangs als Schlussglied einer Zusammensetzung (mit dem Inhalt 'Kind', 'Junge') gedient haben."[15]

7.4.6 Small

An element meaning 'small' can also develop into a diminutive suffix. Hasselrot (1957:300) gives a few examples from North American languages where free morphemes meaning 'small' have become diminutive suffixes. A more recent example can be found in Danish, where lil(le) 'small, little' can sometimes be used as a suffix. If we imagine compounds with adjectives meaning 'small, little' as one of their members as an intermediate stage, many more examples can be found in Danish, German and other languages, e.g. Ger. Kleinwagen, etc.

7.4.7 Expressive

There is yet another possibility. Let us return once more to Chapter 3. There we saw that the two central areas of meaning virtually all diminutives in all languages, ancient and modern have in common are those of 'smallness' and what we have loosely described as 'emotion' or 'subjectivity'. These concepts often go together. That what is small, like a child, a young or small animal, a small and precious object, provokes a positive emotional response. It may on the other hand also be an irritating insect, a small thorn, etc. and provoke a negative emotional response. More often than not smallness and emotion go together and it could

well be that both these concepts combined and were expressed in the same way. Both concepts could then be syncretised in one morpheme which expressed an emotional involvement and an invitation to share this involvement; i.e. an expressive morpheme. Thus N refers to the sense of an object, person, animal and N + x refers to the same sense but invites the addressee to share in the speaker's emotional response to it. Later on the concept of 'smallness' may have become more prominent because the forms were so often used to refer to small objects, but the emotional content remained and remained in the majority of cases the most important element. There is of course no way of testing this possible origin of diminutives, as we cannot ascertain the emotional implications of a form found only in written sources or in reconstructions. These same expressive formations could also be used to form iterative verbs (cf. Hofmann 1961), to attenuate the impact on the listener of the language in general, etc. In Semitic languages diminutives are still primarily expressive and any sense of smallness if it exists is very much of secondary importance. The same seems to be true for Lappish "expressive diminutives". In conclusion we can say that whatever changes in actual meaning take place, they all seem to be within the general framework of the diagram (Fig.3.1) in Chapter 3. Thus supplying further evidence of the existence of the semantic links suggested in that chapter.

7.5 Diachrony and the Sound-Symbolism Theory

If, as has been suggested by various scholars (see Chapter 5) the high front vowel is the most appropriate sound for diminutives, we would expect sound changes within diminutive affixes to move in that direction, or at least not to be affected by other sound changes. In some cases we do indeed find this to be the case,

e.g. with Latin -īnu (and -iccu) the vowel, which is normally stressed in Romance, has survived well. However where a vowel did not receive primary stress, the normal phonological changes seem to override the psychological importance of the vowel. This happened with Middle Dutch -kijn /-ki:n/ which became -ken /-kən/, OHG -(i)li, which retained i only in S.W. German. The extension of the sound-symbolism model to include palatal and palato-alveolar consonants as suggested in Chapter 5 is perhaps also worth considering here, as there are in fact quite a few examples of sound changes in diminutives towards such a consonant. Pentland's (1975:244) example of Old Delaware -čič from Proto-Algonquian *-ēhsehsa supports both, but another Algonquian diminutive, that rendered by means of palatal sound-symbolism, has survived in this form from Proto-Algonquian to the modern languages (Pentland p.248).

Palatalisation in Dutch and Frisian diminutives is usually attributed to Frisian influence (cf. 7.3). Even so, the fact that the high front vowel was dropped and palatalisation retained,[16] would support a stronger case for the palatal consonant symbolism than for vowel symbolism. Lass (pers.comm.) gives the example of Afrikaans -tjie being more and more frequently realised as [ci]or [tʃi]. This may be due to assimilation of course.

7.6 "Fashion" in Diminutives

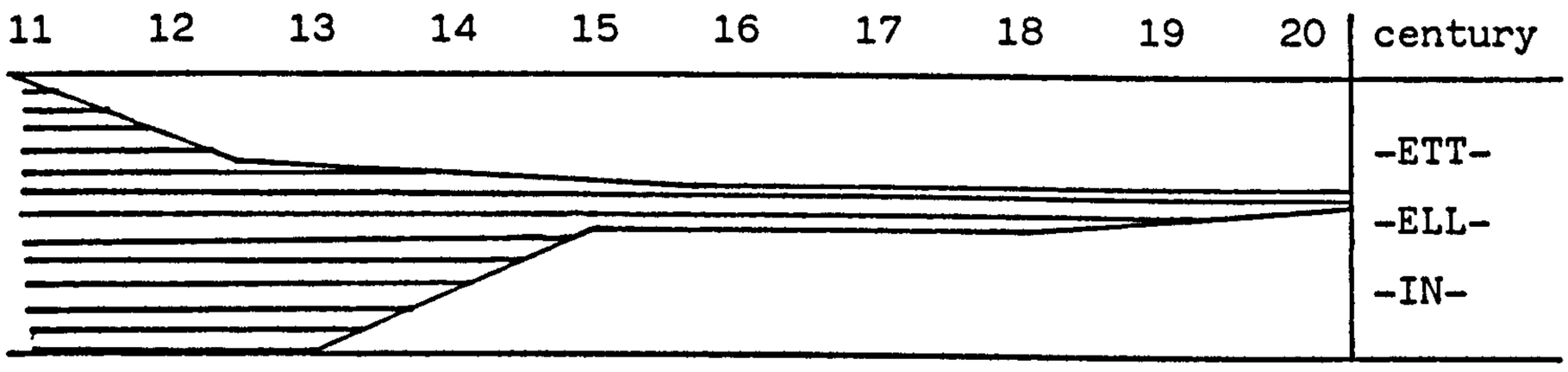
It was already pointed out in Chapter 1, 1.2, that diminutive use is subject to fashion. At the time I illustrated this statement with the case of French diminutives over the past four centuries. Let us now consider this aspect of diminutives in more detail. Changes in diminutive use may be of 3 different kinds:

(a) Changes in the use of one particular suffix in relation to other suffixes.

(b) Changes in the ratio of synthetic/analytic diminutives.

(c) Changes in the use of diminutives in general.

(a) The main diminutive suffixes in Spanish are _-illo_, _-ico_ and _-ito_. For most of its history, however, _-illo_ was the most common diminutive suffix. From about the 16th century onwards, _-ico_ becomes popular - and this may explain its use in parts of America - but from the late 17th century, _-ito_ takes over at the expense of the other suffixes, confining them to certain regions and certain lexical items only. Ettinger (1980:122) gives a simplified diagram, reproduced with variations below, based on data supplied by Sigg (1954) which outlines a similar development in Italian. Here, the suffix _-ell-_ is reduced from a virtual monopoly through being the second most common suffix and finally giving way to _-ett-_ and _-in-_.



We have already seen the case of _-ie_ in Scots, which from a hypocoristic suffix became a diminutive suffix; within about three centuries, it became so popular that it confined the use of _-ock_ to certain small regions. In Standard English, Marchand (1969:289) reports that _-ette_, previously limited to French loans, became productive in the 19th century. From the beginning of this century its meaning became more generalised

to include its 'female' function and, as a diminutive, it received a minor boost during the 1970's in certain circles (see English section Appendix A).

(b) The best example for this phenomenon is French, which developed from a situation where frequent use of synthetic diminutives was the norm, through a period - roughly the 18th century - when both synthetic and analytic diminutives were frowned upon, to a situation in modern French where the ratio of synthetic/analytic diminutive is heavily in favour of the latter. Minor variations in the synthetic/analytic diminutive ratio have been reported from Spanish and Italian in the 18th century, probably under French influence.

(c) Van Haeringen (1975) in a paper entitled "Diminutiva op terugtocht" ('diminutives in retreat') argues that in contemporary Standard Dutch diminutives in general are becoming less common. His argument is largely based on the fact that for many words which in the first half of this century were only used in their diminutive form, the non-diminutive form is increasingly being used. In some of these cases back-formations have even taken place to conform to this tendency. His paper includes about eleven such pairs.[17] The argument is convincing, though it may only hold for these particular pairs. A more detailed study would be required to ascertain if this trend affects the language and its diminutives as a whole. Hofmann (1961:124) reports on a similar though much more obvious development in northern Germany. Over several centuries until the late 1700s the -ke(n) suffix became more and more popular over the north of Germany, extending even into southern Denmark. During the

19th century, however, diminutives in general began to lose favour in the northern parts of the Low German area - roughly between Oldenburg and Schleswig-Holstein - until, finally in the 20th century they disappeared even from the island of Fehmarn. In this area only lexicalised examples with the K-suffix survive. This trend has also reached North Frisian where they have been rapidly disappearing over the past decades.

Footnotes

1. In this sense it corresponds with English -ish, which is related to it.

2. cf. also De Vries' theory in section 2.6.

3. Originally hypocoristics could be formed in Older Scots both with -ie and with -ock, e.g. Betock 'Betty', King Berdock was a character in the burlesque genre in Scots literature of the 16th century. I refer to Guy (1952) for these.

4. Sundén (1910) has a slightly different explanation, which does not include sound symbolism. I refer to his paper for more about this. Perhaps the appearance of -ie in parts of the county of Holland just at the time of the expansion of -ie in Scots deserves some investigation. It is a historical fact that trade between Scottish and Dutch ports was quite important during the 16th and early 17th centuries. Such contacts led for example to such Dutch loans as pinkie (from Du. pink(je)) in Scots.

5. I refer to footnote 3 in the Celtic section of Appendix A.

6. As far as I am aware there is no evidence for the existence of -lach in Old or Middle Yiddish, but I have not pursued the matter.

7. Wrede also traces the modern use of -le/-la for diminutive plural from this suffix: -lach > -la (> -le ?); -lach > -lech > -le. The singular -la would then come from -lain (Wrede 1908: 124, 126).

8. Note also that one of the three areas where -lich was found by Wrede, namely Landau-Bergzabern is very close to Alsace.

9. Landau (1896/7:48) mentions -loch as an emphatic form used in Bohemian Yiddish.

10. According to Landau, Wrede and this does seem the most plausible to me.

11. Beranek (1960:6) gives in addition to these: -ke, -tschik, -schi.

12. According to Weinreich.

13. I refer to Sundén (1910) for a more detailed investigation of the origins of -ie/-y.

14. see Chapter 8.

15. In a similar way adjectives with a sense of 'belonging', 'origin', or 'similarity' may have become suffixes. cf. also 7.4.6.

16. In North Frisian however both sounds occur in dim. suffixes.

17. Most of them are listed in the Dutch section of Appendix A.

8. Conclusions and Universals

8.1 Introduction

The conclusions from this study are of two kinds. First of all a number of new universals emerge and secondly a number of new facts about diminutives in one or more individual languages have been found. Only very few universals concerning diminutives have so far been established. Several more will be proposed in section 8.3. Chomsky (1965:26) stated that "Gross coverage of a large mass of data can often be attained by conflicting theories; for precisely this reason it is not, in itself, an achievement of any particular theoretical interest or importance". One can, however, by considering data from a larger sample of languages discover facts of a different kind than those found by studying only one language or even a small sample of languages in greater depth. Especially for the study of one particular linguistic problem - such as is presented by diminutives - the time has come to move beyond the limits of individual languages and take a more global approach, even if only to see if anything different does in fact emerge. I would suggest that it does. Fortunately this global approach is finding favour with more and more students of language and linguistics, as is witnessed by the works of Greenberg and Comrie and, as Comrie (1981:8) points out, even Chomsky and Halle (1968) take this approach, as their work "..., includes also reference to a hundred other languages, some of which are used crucially in the resolution of general theoretical issues of phonology". In section 8.4 some conclusions for which we cannot claim universality will be presented. These concern one or only a few languages. In some cases a new conclusion can be drawn from facts previously available.

8.2 Previously Established Universals

Many of the studies of diminutives discussed in Chapter 2 contain statements about diminutives in the languages of the world. Only very few of these are probably intended as universals and very few indeed would qualify as such. Thus when Bayle (1975:182) states "Toutes les langues usent de diminutifs", he does not actually back this up with any data. If we take this to mean that every language has some means of referring to objects of a limited size, then it is probably correct, although it is also meaningless. If on the other hand Bayle means to say that every language has subjective diminutives he is probably wrong. In our data for example, Papiamentu does not have subjective diminutives as such. There is little doubt, though that the phenomenon is very widespread.

A few scholars have proposed definite universals. Brender (1925:86) gives the following two:

> "... dass ein Wort um so weniger diminuiert werden kann, je weiter es von der Sphäre des Begriffes "klein" entfernt ist."

This is not something which emerges from our data and as we have seen, the notion of smallness is not necessarily relevant when we are dealing with subjective diminution. Brender's other universal is: "Ein wissenschaftliches Werk wird naturgemäss nur dann Diminutiva enthalten, wenn Kleines oder Verkleinertes bezeichnet werden soll". This seems quite acceptable and I will discuss it in 8.3.3. Hasselrot (1957:248) gives the following universal: "... la langue parlée comme la langue écrite font une plus large consommation de diminutifs que d'augmentatifs (et péjoratifs)". This same point is taken up by Haas (1972:148): "the presence of an augmentative implies the presence of a diminutive but not vice versa". She also picks up the same point as Bayle, although she puts it in a more acceptable

way: "It is safe to say, I think, that the notion of the diminutive is a language universal, or at any rate, a near-universal". When Haas uses the term diminutive she means both objective and subjective diminutive.

We now have two established universals. One is an implicational universal:

(1) If a language has augmentatives, it also has diminutives, but not vice versa. In fact, Greenberg (1966:82) develops this one step further by saying that augmentative is marked in relation to diminutive, which is marked in relation to non-diminutive, the unmarked form.

The second one is a non-implicational tendency:[1]

(2) Nearly all languages have (objective and/or subjective) diminutives. We could perhaps add to this Haas' (1972:148) definition: "The diminutive also usually carries with it a number of affective connotations which range from endearment to tenderness through mild belittlement or deprecation to outright derogation and insult. These points are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

8.3 New Universals

As well as providing additional evidence for the above, the present study enables us to formulate a number of new universals and tendencies. These will be presented in this section, together with data from Appendix A to support them, wherever appropriate.

8.3.1 Sound Symbolism

In 5.4 Fischer-Jørgensen's (1978:84) universal was quoted:

> "The almost complete agreement between the value of vowels in expressive West African words and the results with Danish subjects shows clearly that these values are not dependent on specific languages or cultures. Moreover, experiments with speakers of other languages reported in the literature, support the hypothesis of almost universal values."

In Chapter 5 this was rejected in favour of a theory incorporating both vowels and consonants produced in the palatal and palato-alveolar areas. As a result the above "universal" can now be adapted.

First, however let us consider the data. Of the most commonly used diminutive forming affixes in our data - a sample of 169 - 46 use close front vowels, 30 use palatal and palato-alveolar consonants, while 25 use an open back vowel and 13 use a close back vowel. Many combine some of these sound types, while 41 of the 169 (roughly 25%) do not use any of them. It is perhaps interesting to consider these "exceptions" more closely. Of the 41, 36/116 are Indo-European, while only 5/53 come from the other language families represented in our data. Of the latter, one is the Hottentot suffix -ro/-re, the other four are Amerindian. Among the IE suffixes which do not conform to the general pattern, nine are of the IE K-suffix type, while ten are of the L-suffix type. A further nine are of the -T- or -TT- types, while three belong to the hypocoristic -s suffix. The latter is not strictly speaking a diminutive and could therefore be excluded. The K-type is not confined to IE incidentally. Of the 53 non-IE formants included in the sample, 9 are of this type. The Hungarian suffixes -cske/-cska and -ke/-ka are probably loans from Slavic. The remaining K-forms, however show sufficiently wide distribution to be worthy of consideration. These include the Bantu K-prefixes, the Quechua hypocoristic K-suffixes and the Tlingit -k!°/-k!ᵘ suffix. Whether this provides enough evidence to include K in any universal is open to question. However there is perhaps some scope for developing a diminutive typology based on these K-type,

L-type and other diminutive types. In conclusion then I would propose the following related universals. The first one is a non-implicational tendency:

(3a) A significant number of languages use palatal or palato-alveolar vowels and/or consonants to form diminutives.[2]

Related to this is the implicational tendency:

(3b) Of those diminutives not formed by means of the above, a large majority use peripheral back vowels of the type [u, ɑ].

We could add to this perhaps: ... and/or the back consonant [k].

Although formulated more carefully than Fischer-Jørgensen's universal these have a much more universal value. One other factor that should be borne in mind with any such universal is the fact that the various phonemes of a language are not used with the same frequency. It is therefore possible that the sounds on which the above universals are based are much more common anyhow in the world's languages (cf. 5.8, where this point is discussed in relation to IE languages).

8.3.2 Diminutivisable Categories

The problem of which lexical categories can form diminutives has been touched upon at various stages throughout this study (e.g. Chapter 3). It would appear that there is some sort of hierarchy in which the top members are most likely to form diminutives in the largest number of languages and the bottom members are the least likely to do so. The categories most likely to form diminutives are personal names - which form hypocoristic diminutives - and nouns. Within the category of nouns, those words referring to kinship terms are likely to be diminutivised as a type of hypocoristic diminutive. All the languages in our data which form diminutives do so from these two categories. For the other categories not enough data are available

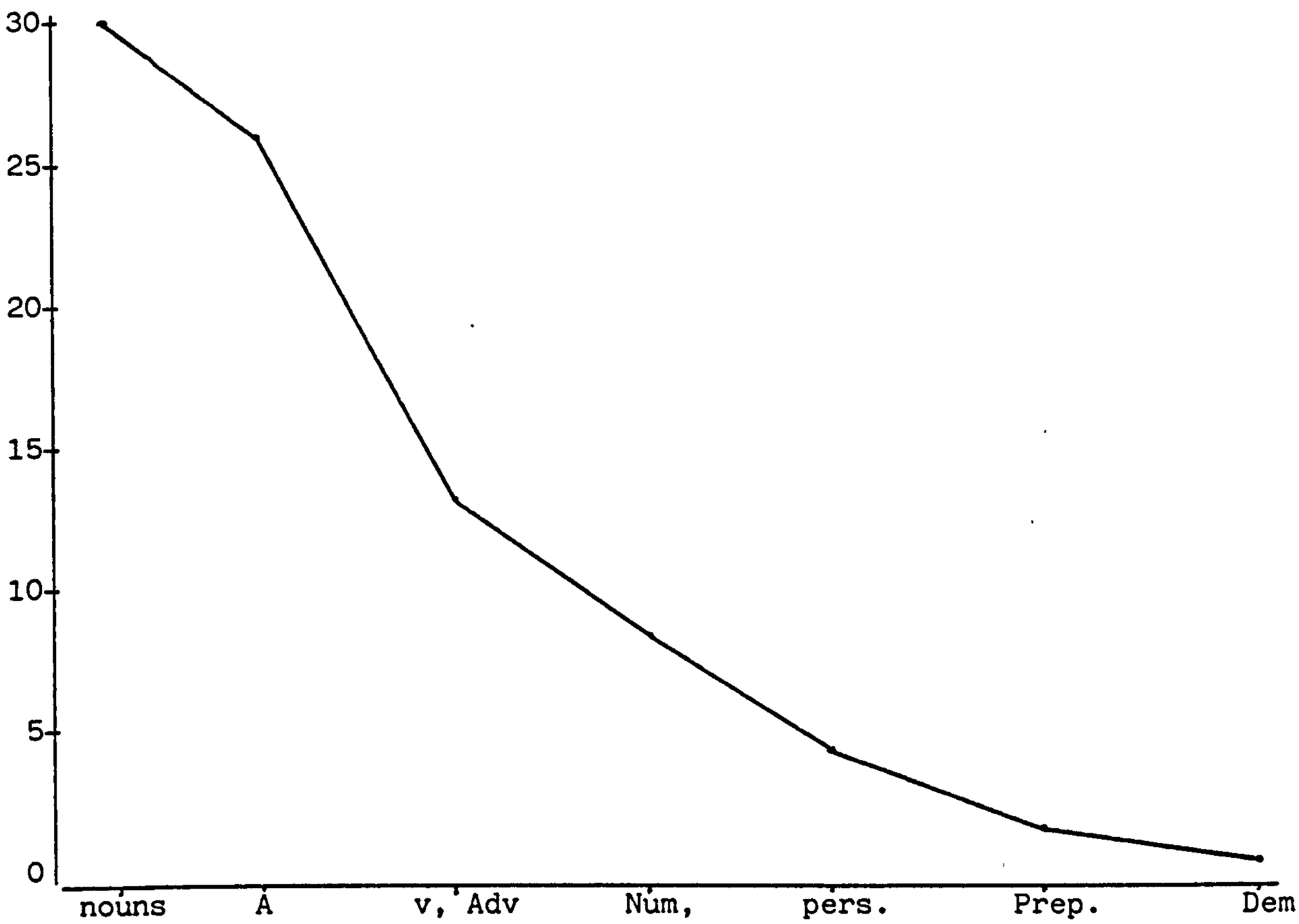
for most of the non-European languages in our data-section so that our analysis has had to be limited to the European languages in Appendix A. Even here the information is not always complete, but this gives us a sample of thirty languages. Of these thirty languages, 26 have diminutive adjectives (27 if we include German dialects), 13 have diminutive adverbs, 13 have diminutive verbs (not including iterative verbs), 8 have diminutive numerals, 8 have diminutive interjections and 4 have diminutive personal pronouns, while only two have diminutive prepositions. Only Basque has true diminutive demonstratives.[4] Among the verbal diminutives, participles are the most common, while verbal diminutives are in many languages confined to the language spoken to (or by) children. A change in category from adjective to noun or numeral to noun is also quite common. In some languages in our data, diminutives are possible in regional dialects which do not exist in the standard dialect. This difference is especially marked in German. The general pattern then is set out in Fig.8.1 . . From this we can draw the graph in Fig.8.2.

The limited data we do possess of non-European languages seems to suggest that the general pattern is not confined to European languages and I would therefore propose this hierarchy as a universal until evidence to the contrary can be found. One problem is that it is not always possible to distinguish these lexical categories in every language. In Tibetan for example it is difficult to distinguish between a noun and an adjective and such aspects should be taken into account when using a universal like the one just proposed.

Figure 8.1

language	pers. name	N	A	Adv	V	Num	Interj	pers. pro.	Prep	Dem
Eng	✓	✓								
Sco	✓	✓				✓				
Fri	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Du	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Afr	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Ger	✓	✓	—Dialects—				—Only—			
Yid	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Dan	✓	✓	✓		✓		Jutland only			
Ice	✓	✓	✓							
Sc.Gae.	✓	✓	✓							
Ir	✓	✓	✓							
Wel	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)							
Bre	✓	✓	✓							
It	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Rh	✓	✓	✓		✓					
Fr	✓	✓	✓							
Oc	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Cat	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Sp	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Por	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rum	✓	✓	✓	✓			one example			
Latv	✓	✓	✓							
Lit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Sorb	✓	✓								
Cz	✓	✓	✓							
Rus	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Bas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓
Hun	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Lap	✓	✓	✓		✓					
Mal	✓	✓	✓							
	30	30	26	13	13	8	8	4	2	1
	i		ii	iii		iv		v	vi	vii

Figure 8.2



The implications of this universal are that if we encounter a language which has for example diminutive adverbs, it is reasonably safe to assume that it also has diminutive adjectives, nouns and hypocoristics. This is not always the case, because, as we can see from Fig.8.1 there are a number of gaps. Thus in Danish diminutive verbs do exist, but diminutive adverbs apparently not. What does seem to emerge are seven distinct bands which are hierarchically ordered. Having discovered these bands we can now propose the following implicational universal tendency.

(4) The lexical categories which form diminutives are hierarchically ordered such that at the top of this hierarchy there are those categories which are most likely to form diminutives and at the bottom are those which are least likely to form diminutives. This universal hierarchy is as follows:

(i) personal names, nouns

(ii) adjectives

(iii) verbs, adverbs

(iv) numerals, interjections

(v) (personal) pronouns

(vi) prepositions

(vii) demonstratives

If a language has diminutives in one of these classes, it will also have diminutives in the classes above it in the hierarchy. Keenan & Comrie (1977) introduced aconvention for presenting such "accessibility hierarchies", which gives these findings the following form:

Accessibility Hierarchy

PN, N > A > V, ADV > NUM, INT > PRO > PREP > Dem

At first Scots seems to be an exception to the universal, as it has diminutive numerals but no diminutive adjectives, adverbs or verbs. This is however based on only one marginal example: Little wee eenickie, in which eenickie is, strictly speaking, a nominal form. Such an example could, perhaps be excluded. If we now check this new universal with those non-European languages for which we do have sufficient information, i.e. Tigrē, Tibetan and Quechua, we find the following:

language	pers. names	N	A	Adv	V	Num	Interj	pers. Pro	Prep	Dem
Tigrē	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓
Tibetan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Quechua	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
	3	3	2	2	3	1		1		1
		i	ii	iii		iv		v	vi	vii

We find that they too conform to the hierarchy, except that is for the Tigrē diminutive demonstratives. This may not be a serious problem, because demonstratives can always be recategorised as either demonstrative adverbs or demonstrative pronouns. Littman (1943:100) classes these particular forms as pronouns, so if we generalise the heading "personal pronouns" to cover all pronouns, we can capture these forms without radically changing our universal. This still leaves a gap, however, between classes (iii) and (v) in Tigrē and we would really need more information both about Tigrē - to verify that there is indeed this gap - and about diminutive systems around the world to see if this occurs in other languages as well. If it does we may have to modify universal (4) somewhat, perhaps by combining more categories and thus reducing the number of classes. This is certainly an area which deserves further investigation. It should be pointed out that these diminutives in Tigrē are limited to the words for 'this' and 'that' and there is a definite tendency for the diminutive to become less productive the lower down the hierarchy it is applied. So marked is this tendency in our data that it requires its own universal, related, obviously to universal nr. (4).

(5) The lower down the hierarchy a word class is the less productive the diminutive is in that class.

8.3.3 Semantic Criteria

In 8.3.2 it was mentioned that kinship terms often behave like personal names in the way they form hypocoristic diminutives in many languages. The reason for this may be that both are commonly used as terms of address. It may in fact be extended in some languages to cover domestic pets and sometimes other words as well, which seem to belong to the speaker's closest personal experience and are therefore endowed with a personality of their own. It was also found that if a language has diminutive adjectives, the words for 'small' or 'little' are the most likely candidates, usually followed by colour terms and often the word for 'big' or 'large'. The latter is quite contrary to the findings of Brender as given in 8.2. If a language has diminutive adverbs, at least one of the set meaning 'slowly', 'softly' or 'silently' is among them and often one or more of these are the only diminutive adverbs in the language. In a few languages adverbs meaning 'here' or 'there' can form diminutives.

Clearly there are certain widespread semantic criteria involved. Some areas of meaning are more likely to yield diminutives than others. While we can quite categorically state what was just mentioned above, Brender's pseudo-universal concerning semantic distance from the concept 'small' is an oversimplification. In fact the use of a diminutive derived from 'large' is reasonably widespread. Even Spanish - which, as we have seen, (6.2.1.1) does not allow diminutives from augmentatives - has no qualms about a form like grandecito, especially in the American dialects. What semantic criteria if any should then be considered? First of all there are clear and widespread links between diminutive meaning and lexical category. If we refer back once more to universal (4) we can state that:

(6a) The further down the hierarchy a diminutive form occurs, the less the actual change in meaning and the greater the importance of subjective diminutive force.

This is in fact what we found in Chapter 3, especially 3.11. This universal may be linked with Aronoff's claim that "there is a direct link between semantic coherence and productivity" (see Chapter 6 and Aronoff 1976:38-39). In the case of diminutives as we go down the hierarchy, productivity decreases as does semantic coherence (universal (6a)), at least in the strict sense of the objective diminutive. As a result the subjective diminutive element becomes relatively more marked. In relation to the above we should also mention the pragmatic universal, already mentioned informally in 3.12.4 and given as Brender's 2nd universal in 8.2:

(6b) The more formal the sociolinguistic domain, the less frequent are the subjective diminutives, while purely objective diminutives are equally common in all domains.

Finally, we could -- less formally -- state the types of nouns that most readily form diminutives in a sort of sub-hierarchy. This is based on findings presented quite clearly in Appendix A. Basically it amounts to the following hierarchy of semantic areas:

a) kinship terms

b) body parts (especially of children)

c) pets, domestic animals and familiar objects

d) natural phenomena in the speaker's close environment

e) nouns referring to other areas

or: kinship terms > body parts > pets etc > nat.phen. > other nouns.

8.3.4 Other Trends and Universals

Bauer (1983:86) gives a proposed universal by Rose (1973:516), which states that relationships which can be expressed derivationally are simple and general. We saw in Chapter 4 that such synthetic methods are most commonly used to express diminutives around the world. Diminutive , especially in its objective sense, but also in its subjective sense can probably be regarded as such a "simple and general" relationship and our findings can therefore be seen as further evidence to support this universal. There are also a number of implied universals discussed at various points throughout this thesis. The most important of these is probably the universal semantic scope of diminutives as outlined in Chapter 3. A suspected universal tendency - for which non-European data is limited - is given in 3.2. It states that an objective diminutive is normally expressed (or grammaticalised) by means of an analytic form, whereas a subjective diminutive is normally grammaticalised by means of a synthetic form. The synthetic form may of course express both at the same time.

8.4 Other Conclusions

From the data section (Appendix A) and the previous chapters a number of new facts about individual languages emerge. Naturally it is pointless to discuss all of these again at this stage so I will review only a few. In recent years some of the earlier work on the origin of Yiddish diminutives seems to have been forgotten. In 7.3.1 I have taken the opportunity of collecting all the known facts, adding a few others from German dialect studies and by doing this we can now ascertain better than before the dialectal origin of Yiddish diminutives and therefore probably of Yiddish as a whole, before it started its eastward trek. In addition some new facts seem to emerge concerning diminutives in Standard English. As far as I

am aware, Marchand (1969) - the foremost authority on English word-formation - does not mention some of the facts about diminutive formation in English outlined in Chapter 6. I am referring in particular to the marked preference for monosyllabic bases shown by -ie/-y and the "syllable reduction rule" (6.4.1) that brings about this condition in polysyllabic bases. The fact that the tendency toward complementary distribution shown by -let and -ette is not discussed is perhaps more understandable. This is by no means 100% regular after all, even though the pattern emerges quite convincingly from our - admittedly limited - data. All of this was collected during 1981-85 and it is therefore possible that we are dealing with a recent phenomenon, not evident when Marchand did his original research and not evident from the many lexicalised forms with these suffixes in the language.

8.5 The Maps

A number of maps occur throughout this thesis. Those shown in Chapter 4 are based on data provided by the areal typological study by Sherzer (1976) and are not available elsewhere in this form. The most important map however is that accompanying Appendix A. Ettinger (1981) points at the problems involved in making a truly comprehensive dialect atlas for diminutives (see also 2.5). A number of atlasses and maps are available, but most of these are based on different criteria. Some study the frequency of one or more suffixes in a particular area, others look at the local rendering of a number of specific diminutive forms, etc. As our map is based on a combination of most of these plus some additional material, it combines all the disadvantages connected with them. It does, however attempt for the first time to show the distribution of the most common suffixes

in a wider, Western and Central European context. Its value is first of all as an aid for the reader to keep track of all the various forms discussed in Appendix A. Furthermore it shows - at least to some extent - how diminutive suffixes tend to cross linguistic boundaries in many parts of Europe and how diminutive types in one dialect can be related to those in another.

Footnotes

1. Comrie (1981:19).

2. This tendency is more marked in Indo-European languages, albeit that this is probably largely due to the fact that IE languages use more of the sounds in question than other languages (see 5.8).

3. This includes Basque, Maltese, Lappish, etc.

4. If we exclude the Dutch expression ditjes en datjes 'one thing and another'.

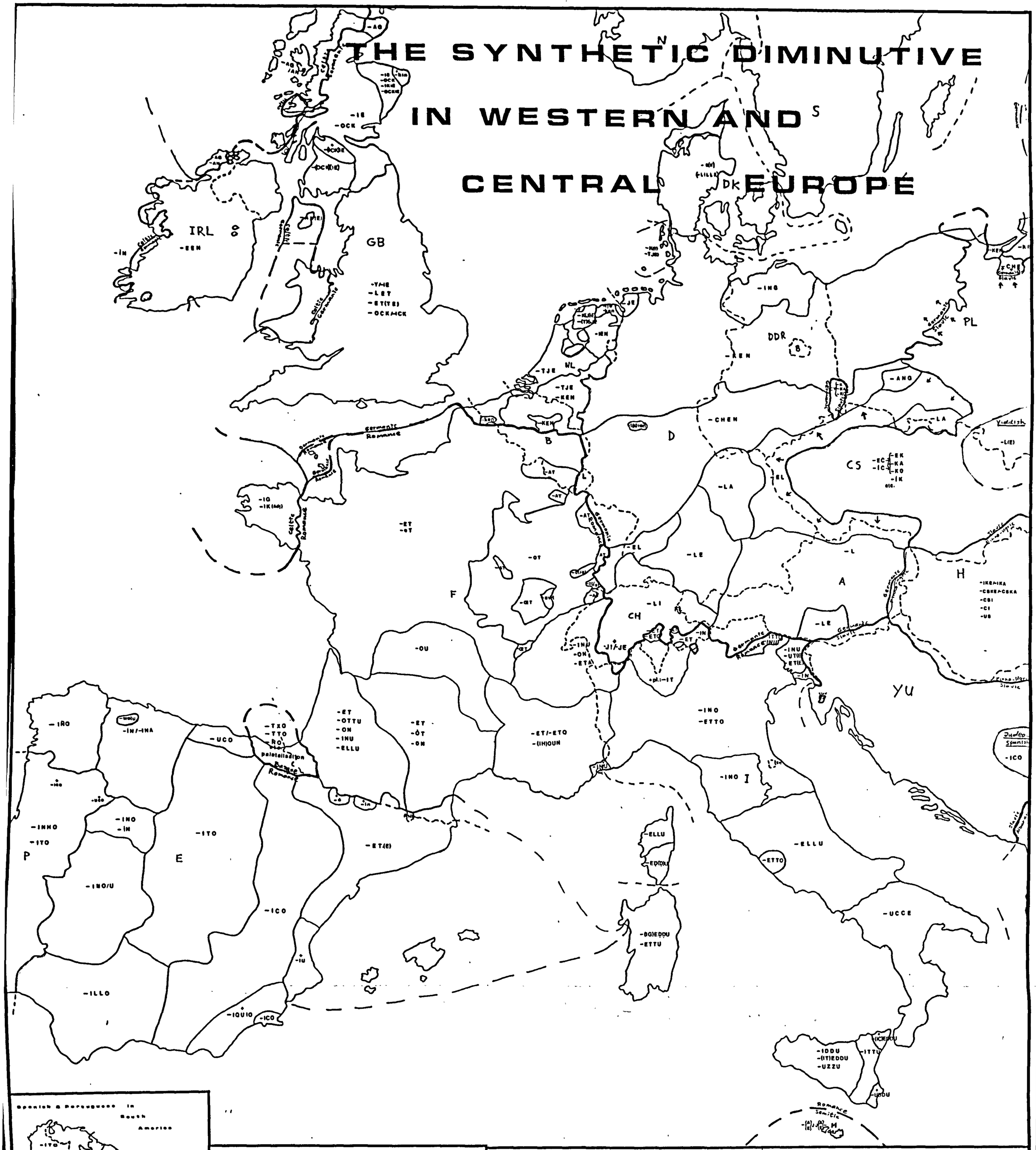
Appendix A : Data

	Page
Germanic	
English	231
Scots	242
W. Frisian	245
Dutch	251
Afrikaans	267
German	271
Yiddish	280
Danish	287
Icelandic	290
Celtic	
Scottish Gaelic	294
Irish	295
Welsh	302
Breton	304
	304
Romance	
Italian	306
Rhaetoromance	314
French	316
Occitan	323
Catalan	327
Spanish	330
Portuguese	341
Rumanian	353
Papiamentu	361

	Page
Slavic and Baltic	
Lithuanian	362
Latvian	370
Sorbian	**371**
Czech	374
Russian	376
Basque	382
Finno-Ugric	
Hungarian	386
Lappish	391
Semitic	393
Arabic	393
Maltese	395
Tigrē	397
Bantu	402
Swahili	403
Fernandian	404
Kongo	405
Lumasaaba	406
Tette and Sena	406
Otyihererǒ	407
Southern Bantu	408
Xhosa	409
Tsonga	410
Khoisan	
Hottentot	410

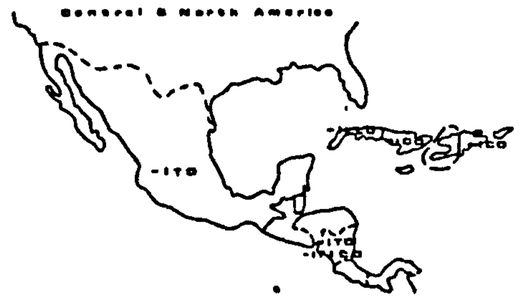
	Page
Sino-Tibetan	
Tibetan	411
Australian	
Ngiyambaa	414
Amerindian	
Quechua	416
Guaraní	421
Maya	422
Aztec	423
Tlingit	425
Quinault	425
Kwakiutl	426
Yokuts	426
Nez Perce	428
Bella Coola	428
Snohomish	430
Kalispelm	430
Thompson and Shuswap	430
Yurok	431

THE SYNTHETIC DIMINUTIVE IN WESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE



Spanish & Portuguese in South America

Spanish in General & North America



This map is the result of several years of research. Many different sources were used for its construction, however some of these proved more useful than others. The most important works deserve to be mentioned separately and these are the following: Aquilina (1965), Bergsland (1961), Battaglini (1947), Haeseler (1937), Hasan (1948 & 1975), König (1978), Miller (1943), O'Mahilly (1972), Pío (1937-38), Schultz (1941), Skarga (1956), Séguin (1952), Wrede (1908). Others can be found in the bibliographies.

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Language Family Boundary

Recent Shift of Boundary

Language Without Fixed Territory

Isoglosse or Dialect Boundary

National Border

E — Nationality Lesser

-EC — Diminutive Suffix

• palatalisation — Other Synthetic Diminutive Formation

English

In Modern Standard English the most common way of expressing a diminutive is by means of an analytic construction involving the adjectives little and small, about which more later in this section. In this respect English is not unsimilar to the Scandinavian languages and to French (see Chapter 3). Synthetic diminutives do still exist, though, using a number of different suffixes. The most productive of these is -y/-ie, used mainly for hypocoristics, kinship terms, pets and other words related to child-language. It is attached (almost?) exclusively to monosyllabic stems.

e.g.	Johnny	mummy	doggie	nighty
	Willy	daddy	bunny	nappies
	Jenny	granny	birdie	pottie
	Cathy	auntie	comfy	

With many of these examples the suffix is added to a truncated stem or, in the case of compounds, a form shortened by removing the second member of the compound as in grandmother - granny; nightdress - nighty, presumably to achieve the monosyllabic structure. This suffix is also used with certain adjectives to describe a person who possesses that particular quality: fatty, shortie etc. An article by K. Harder (1964) reports on the suffix -ee (+stress), which in America "... seems to be gaining wider currency as a diminutive and, more particularly, is often applied to names of clothing worn by women and children. In addition, it may be gaining some ascendancy over the diminutive ending -ie and perhaps -y. The suffix is pronounced in the same way as the corresponding sounds in employee, ..." (295)[1] It is used as a noun → noun suffix. The author gives among others the following examples:

Frothee '... the foaming luscious looking "cream head" on cocktails'

Golf-ees 'men's golf glove'

strolee 'baby stroller' ('pram')

shortee '- skirts'

slackees 'new panty girdle'

It is doubtful whether these should be considered diminutives in the proper sense as Harder does. They may in some cases be linked with the "advertisers diminutive" of product names discussed at the end of this section.

The second most productive diminutive suffix is -let. A number of lexicalised examples exist.

e.g. piglet rivulet hamlet booklet
leaflet streamlet droplet etc.

This suffix is still to some extent productive and usually has the sense of small size only. As such it is often used by scientists, especially biologists to refer to smaller or younger forms of a species.

Over the past few years I have collected the following examples, which show the productivity of -let and -ette:

A. -let

1) It was a little punlet (Germaine Greer on Midweek, BBC radio 4, 25/1/84)

2) A consumer boomlet (The Financial World Tonight, BBC radio 4, 21/1/83

3) Teachestlet (marketed by Royal Crown of India)

4) Tinlets (of Humbrol enamel)

5) Toadlet (Natural Selection, BBC radio 4, 27/2/81)

6) We discovered thousands of ringlets (Science Now, BBC radio 4, 24/11/80; speaking about newly discovered smaller rings around Saturn)

7) textlet (in: R. Lass, Yiddish, unpublished handout accompanying a lecture)

8) nitlet (Weekend, BBC radio 4, 16/8/81)

9) The little fortlet at Glenbank (The World at One, BBC radio 4, 20/2/84)

10) moonlets (circling the moons of Jupiter; National Geographic Magazine, Vol.160, No.1, July 1981, 41-2)

11) Statelet (Sunday Times, 18/12/83, referring to Ciskei "Homeland" in RSA)

12) Wifelet means little wife ... It's a nicer word than concubine or mistress I tend to have one wifelet and Anna going at a single time ... (Lord Weymouth in the Sunday Mirror, date unknown)

13) fist-size clumplets (Allan Titchmarsh, You and Yours, BBC radio 4, 4/2/83)

14) newtlet (Woman's Hour, BBC radio 4, 10/8/84)

15) sissified little egglets (On the Air, BBC radio 4, 24/5/83)

B. -ette

1) It is not a crocodile, it is more a crocodilette (Russel Harty, BBC2, 15/1/81)

2) smilette (Midweek, BBC radio 4, 4/11/81)

3) newscasterette (Joke for Joke, BBC radio 4, 22/9/81)

4) pepperette (Woman's Hour, BBC radio 4, 21/9/81; referring to a small pepper)

5) Right, we have a little trailette for you (DLT Show, BBC radio 1, 7/4/84, 12:30 pm)

6) It's a major story - well, a sort of majorette story (Simon Bates, BBC radio 1, 11/4/84, 11:05 am; talking about a special feature on The Who rock-group)

7) I was a sort of ordinary little mini diplomatette (Beverley Anderson on Midweek, BBC radio 4, 23/5/84)

8) The Southend Synchronettes (a synchronised swimming team)

9) I was really stuck for an interesting kind of openingette (Malcolm McLaren on Arena Special, BBC2, 12/7/84, 8 pm)

10) I get what is known in my family as "tantrettes", ... a small tantrum ... (Woman's Hour, BBC radio 4, 11/10/84)

11) Special featurette! (Rowan & Martin's Laugh-in, BBC2, 6/11/84 ; originally made in 1969)

12) ... who will be replaced by a lord spokesperson and presumably a lady spokespersonette (The News-quiz, BBC radio 4, 23/5/83)

13) I do foresee a teensy-weensy snaggette ("Leon Brittan" on Spitting Image, ITV, 20/1/85)

14) There is just one teedly drawbackette (as above)

An earlier example of productive -let is roomlet,[2] encountered in "Saki" (1911), 'Adrian', in The Cronicles of Clovis.

The closely related suffix -et (from which -let developed; cf. Rotzoll (1910) does not seem to be as productive now. The same suffix in its more recent, stressed form -ette[3] seems to be increasingly productive, however. It may have been boosted by its use in "gay" and media/artistic circles in the 70's. As a result, there are now, next to lexicalised examples like: statuette, cigarette, maisonette, etc., the more recent examples listed above. As well as this diminutive meaning, often with humorous connotations, -ette has two other meanings in English. The first of these is its use as a female agent marker, to derive a 'female agent', from a 'male agent' e.g. usher - usherette; major - majorette and examples B3, 7, 8 and 12 above. This is only partly productive and when used shares some of the humorous and derogatory connotations of the diminutive -ette as is illustrated by the example:

B3) newscasterette.

The other use of the suffix is that of referring to an "'imitation' (material)" (Quirk & Greenbaum 1973:436), implying that although it is somehow similar to the original, it is not quite the same.

e.g. Leatherette; plasticette; flannelette (Quirk & Greenbaum 1973:436)

and laundry - launderette is perhaps also of this kind, even though it is not covered by the definition in Quirk & Greenbaum (1973).

In addition to these suffixes there are a number of largely fossilised diminutive suffixes in English. Some of these survive in various degrees of productivity in regional dialects. Others can occasionally be revived with humorous effect; e.g. -ling in: "Can I leave the wartlings here?" (a friend of mine, about her cats). All of these suffixes have left lexicalised traces in Standard English:

-kin: bodkin; pannikin; lambkin

-ling:[4] gosling; duckling; underling; hatchling

-ock: hillock; bollock; bullock; buttock

(also -ick in some dialects, e.g.: addick 'adder' Somerset-Devon, Rotzoll:297)

-et: nymphet;[5] leveret

As one goes North, the productivity of many of these suffixes increases and the same is true for the suffix -y/-ie, as is illustrated by Rotzoll (1910:265)[6]

	Englische Schriftsprache	Englische Dialekte		Schottland
		Süden u. Mittelland	Norden	
1500—1700	Die Beispiele nicht zahlreich.	Nicht reichlich.	Der Norden hat Beispiele aufzuweisen, da er unter schottischem Einfluß steht.	Das Suffix erobert sich den schottischen Boden und beginnt, mehr und mehr zu gedeihen. Die Beispiele sind zahlreicher als in der Schriftsprache.
1700—1800	Die Beispiele mehren sich; zahlreich sind sie nicht.	Zahlreicher als in der Schriftsprache.	Da der Norden Schottl. näher steht, sind die Beisp. hier zahlreicher als im Mittelland u. Süden.	Das Jahrhundert gipfelt in der Blütezeit für das Formans, in Robert Bu. und der Volkspoesie.
1800—1900	Das Formans ist in der Schriftsprache durchaus lebhaft produzierend; die Zahl der Beispiele aber ist gegenüber den Dialekten, vor allem gegenüber Schottland, dennoch beschränkt. Lebendig und regsam ist es in der Kindersprache und in Eigennamen.	In den Dialekten blüht das Suffix viel gleichmäßiger; die Vorherrschaft des Nordens ist zwar noch da, doch nicht mehr so dominierend wie bisher.		Das Suffix ist in Schottland lebenskräftig u. gedeiht dort auf den verschiedensten Gebieten (cf. Material). Es ist noch in seiner Blütezeit und in vollster Entwicklung.

Fig A1

I also refer to the section on Scots in this respect.

As well as these now native suffixes, a new Romance suffix has recently been introduced into the jargon of English-speaking particle physicists. This suffix is -ino, presumably borrowed from Spanish or Italian (cf. relevant sections of this thesis).

e.g. graviton - gravitino

photon - photino

neutron - neutrino

These diminutives refer to small size only, without any emotional connotations.

Finally, there is one more suffix, that deserves a mention. This is the mainly hypocoristic suffix -o added to a shortened stem, used specially in Welsh English:

e.g. wino

boy - boyo

Red Robbo (the BL shop-steward)

etc.

In Hiberno-English the Irish diminutive -ín[7] has become quite productive in the form -een. These forms are of two types.

(1) Words borrowed from Irish as diminutives.

e.g. botharín - boreen 'narrow lane'

cailín - colleen (caile 'country woman')

poitín - poteen (poitín 'little pot')

(2) Words using a productive Hiberno-English suffix -een.

e.g. girleen; lougheen; buckeen; squireen (Rotzoll 1910:304-305)

Standard English also forms hypocoristics by means of shortening the stem.

e.g. Elizabeth - Liz

Catherine - Cath

Edward - Ed (- Ted, Eddy, Teddy, etc.)

Douglas - Doug

In some dialects, especially Australian English, this formation is quite productive for nouns.[8]

e.g. differential - diff

utility - ute

university - uni

speedometer - speedo

Also used mainly for hypocoristics is the suffix -s only marginally productive and often found with an additional -y/-ie suffix.[9]

e.g. Babs, Bess, (> Bessy), Mums, Pops, etc.

and also: the creeps, muggins, four-eyes, boots (for a hotel servant, corks for a butler (Langenfelt 1941:204-205).

A special use for diminutive suffixes has developed recently in English and this is their frequent use for product names. We could call this the "advertisers diminutive".

e.g. Twiglets; Niblets; Cookeen; Yorkie bar; Fruitetts; Hoover Dustette; Ovranette; Poppet; Cauliflower Florets; Steaklets; Chicklets; Frosties; Shreddies; Rice Krispies; Oat Krunchies; Babettes; Snapettes; Cheeselets; Chiplets; Lillets; computer diskette; etc.

A few alternative methods exist in the morphology to create some kind of diminutive. For example by compounding with mini-, micro-, etc.

e.g. minicar; miniskirt; minicomputer; microcomputer;

or kidsister, kidbrother, etc. in American English.

Thun (1963:144) mentions the diminutive sense carried by some reduplicative words in English:

e.g. teeny-weeny (118); bitsy-witsy; inky-dinky, itty-bitty; peerie-weerie; tid-bit (144), etc.

These forms are also common with hypocoristics, as Thun's account illustrates in Chapter 11.

e.g. Georgie-Porgie; Charlie-Parlie; Lizzie-Mizzie-Wizzie; etc.(149)

Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), who deal with these forms on p.448, do not mention this diminutive sense, however.

Small and Little

The manner in which these two adjectives interrelate in English merits some consideration at this point. Even though they are often considered synonymous - and this is borne out by the confusion often created in the English glosses for diminutives in other languages - they are used differently. Anton Sieberer (1950/1) points in the right direction when he states that "Das Englische und Skandinavische erträgt seinen Mangel an Deminution leichter infolge des Besitzes von little und lille, neben denen ein sachliches small und smaa (Plural) stehen."

The OED itself recognises this difference. It[10] says about small: "Of deficient or comparatively little size; ... not large (usu. without the emotional implications of little) OE..." and about little: "Often synonymous with small, but capable of emotional implications which small is not ... used with an implication of endearment or depreciation, or of tender feeling on the part of the speaker, 1567..." (see also 3.2.1).

Before analysing these differences between little and small in more detail it may be interesting to consider them in their Germanic context. Sieberer (ibid) already refers to their use in Scandinavian

but they seem to have survived in some form in most Germanic languages (see Fig.A2). It does appear, however, that only in English they have developed this extra subjective dimension in any clear-cut way. The meaning 'narrow' seems to have been part of the meaning of small: "... having little breadth or width in proportion to length; narrow. Now rare. OE..." (OED) Similarly the Modern Dutch luttel has a meaning which is also covered by English little. The OED lists for little the meaning 'trivial' from OE onwards.

As we have seen, Sieberer relates the relative rarity of productive diminutive suffixes in Standard English to the use of little as an alternative. I would like to go further and claim that little is the English equivalent of the synthetic diminutive in most other European (and many non-European) languages.[11]

OE	OFris.		OHG		ON			
lytel	lîtik (>lîtja)		luzzil MHG: lützel		lítill/lítinn			
smael	smel		smal		smár			
English	W.Frisian	Dutch	Low Ger.	German	Danish	Swedish	Norwegian	Icelancic
little	lyts	luttel	lück lütt		lille	lilla	lite(n)	lítl
	'small'	'trivial, unimportant' 'small'			'small, little'	idem	'small, little'	
small	smel	smal		schmal	smaa	smal	smal	smá
	'narrow'	'narrow'		'narrow'	pl.of lille	'narrow'	'narrow'	

Fig. A2

While small is the English equivalent of the diminutive in its analytic form in these languages. The following comparison may illustrate this claim. Consider the following seen on a Mini in Edinburgh:

This charming little Mini estate is for sale

There is little doubt that little could not be replaced by small in this sentence. It is probably the use of the emotional adjective charming that partly dictates the use of little rather than small. Another factor is that small would be redundant as the very name Mini implies 'a small car'. Therefore the only reason why little is used is emotional. In a similar situation a Dutchman or a Spaniard would have used a synthetic diminutive:

e.g. dit autootje is te koop 'this little car is for sale'

este cochecito se vende "

Another example comes from the English rendering of e.g. little Red Riding Hood, who in Dutch and German has a diminutive suffix in her name: Roodkapje; Rotkäpchen.[12] In these examples where emotion is indicated by the adjectives, little is virtually obligatory:

a nice little car; a pleasant little drive; a beautiful little village; a sweet little girl.

In these examples small could not really be used unless with a different meaning. Small can only be used if reduced size is the overriding element to be expressed. Little can also be used for negative emotions; the derogatory diminutive.

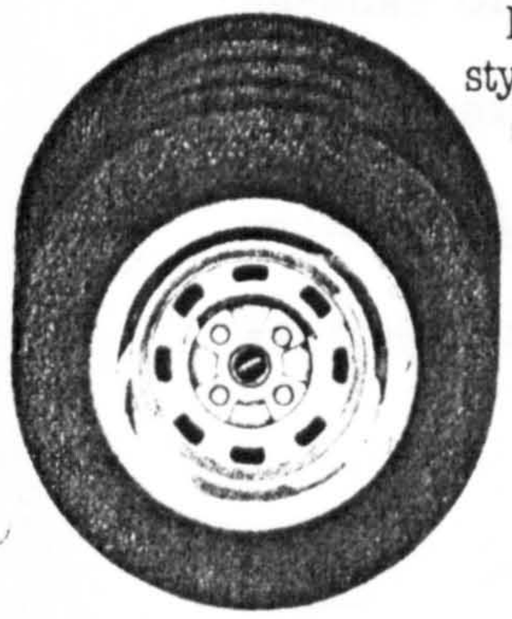
e.g. a horrible little man; a depressing little place; you obnoxious little brat!; get your dirty little hands off my ...!; and wipe that grin off your stupid little face!; and from The Scotsman (15th Dec 1983): "This is a mean little cut and I will be asking the Scottish Office to reconsider."

Where there is no indication or intention in the mind of the speaker that an element of emotion is to be expressed then small is used to refer to reduced size only.

You're gonna love our Great Little Car. Mazda GLC Sport.

Great little piston engine. Great little goodies. Great little price.

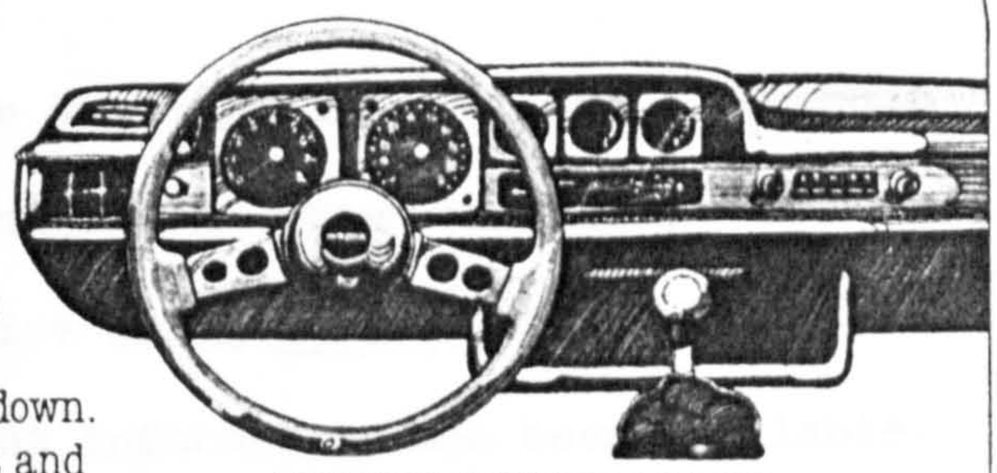
Now, Mazda has a dynamite little GLC called Sport. It's the sexiest member of Mazda's big new GLC family for 1978.



STYLED ROAD WHEEL

Buy the Sport and you get super-looking styled road wheels (with trim rings). Fat steel-belted radials also come standard.

The split rear seat lets you redesign the interior at will. Both seats up. One seat up, one seat down. Or both seats down.

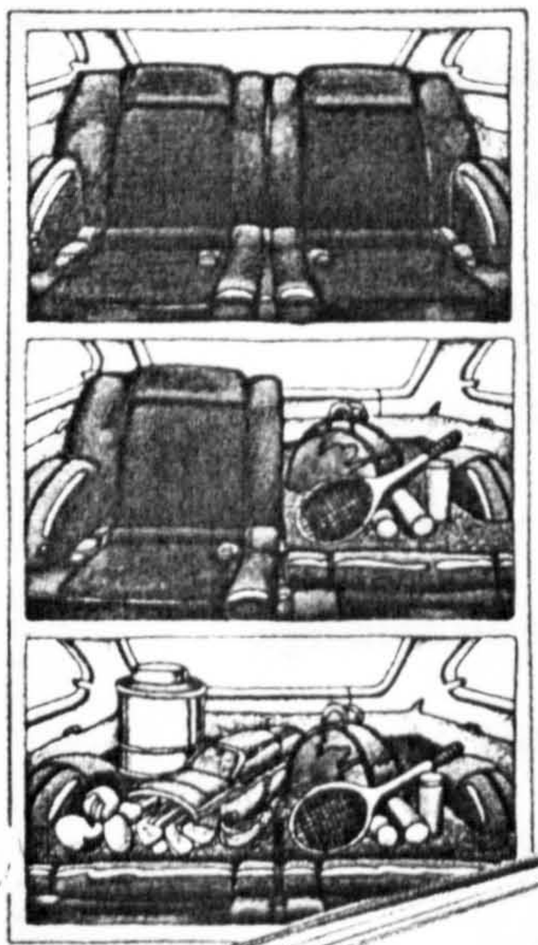


SPECIAL COCKPIT DESIGN

Try on the cockpit of the GLC Sport and you'll find it fits beautifully. Its overall design is nothing short of remarkable. There's a tach. Electric clock. Real wood steering wheel. Wood-grain inserts. Reclining seats. Electric (yes) remote control hatch release button. And a slick 5-speed stick shift. Outside the cockpit, you get a sporty, color-keyed side mirror. Special stripes. And it all comes standard. For a sporting $3849.** Neat. (Radio shown optional).

The GLC Sport gives you a bunch of good stuff. For not a bunch of money. That goes for the Sport, the Deluxe 5-door Hatchback, and the Standard or Deluxe 3-door Hatchbacks.

Mazda's Great Little Car is a great little car. You're gonna love it.



SPLIT REAR SEAT

*EPA estimates based on 5-speed transmission. Your mileage may vary depending on how and where you drive, your car's condition, and optional equipment. 42/33 mpg Calif.
**POE Seattle price (slightly higher in Calif., and other areas). Taxes, license, freight, and optional equipment are extra. GLC prices for models not shown range from $3074 to $3594.

GLC. Now, four great little cars in all, from $3074.**

e.g. the era of the small car has only just begun

add a small amount of sugar

he is only small for his age

ours is only a small house

Because of this difference between the two adjectives I have throughout this thesis glossed the analytic diminutive in other languages using small and the synthetic diminutive using little unless this is inappropriate, or where insufficient information has been available.

Scots

The Scottish dialects display considerable variation in their use of diminutives. In many areas, especially the "Central Belt" the analytic diminutive, using wee is more common than the synthetic diminutive. And in a similar way Insular Scots (or Norn) uses an analytic diminutive with peerie (cf. Murison 1977:36). On the whole, western central Scotland uses the lowest number of synthetic diminutives. In the North-East however and spreading along a large part of the East coast, the synthetic diminutive - often combined with an analytic diminutive - is by far the most common. The most popular suffix in the North-East (Aberdeen, Buchan, etc.) and over the rest of Scotland is -ie.

> "-ie is a diminutive suffix particularly common in Scottish, and passages where it occurs in the vernacular cannot be rendered into standard English without dropping the diminutive form" (Grant & Dixon 1921:184)

e.g. hoosie wifie bairnie (Rotzoll 1910:170) sweeties

mannie dearie beastie (" :171)

plaidie pinkie[13] clootie 'the devil' (Rotzoll:176)

jougie 'little jug' (Murison 1977:33)

deukie 'little duck' (Grant & Dixon 1921:184)

This suffix is also used as a kind of diminutive marker when referring to certain professions.

e.g. postie 'postman' (Dieth 1932:143)

gamie 'game-keeper' (Oor Wullie 1982; Dieth 1932:143)

As in English the suffix is used to form hypocoristics and kinship-diminutives.

e.g. Oor Wullie Jimmie Dougie Charlie

/ kirste / 'Christina' (Dieth 1932:143) grannie

Often this synthetic diminutive is accompanied by an analytic diminutive.

e.g. this wee wee German lairdie

Another suffix which is still productive in some dialects of Scots is -ock.

e.g. bowrock (from bower)[14]

winnock 'small window'

bittock 'little bit'

(Grant & Dixon:186)

the little ones at their playocks (John Galt, The Annals of the Parish, 1821, Ch.XVII)

lassock

fitchock (fitch 'polecat') (Rotzoll 1910:295)

laverock 'lark' is an example of a fossilised diminutive which has no non-dim. counterpart in Modern Scots. As well as -ie and -ock the North-East knows a reinforced diminutive using the complex -ickie/-ockie, basically -ock + ie.

e.g. drap - drappikie (Westergaard 1924:65)

little wee bit lassickies

little wee bit eenickie 'the infant of the household'

(Bulloch 1924:127)

This double suffix also occurs sporadically in the West and South-West.

Bulloch (1924:139-40) also mentions the example of an Aberdeenshire family who illustrate this 2-stage diminutive system: "The landowner was called the "laird"; his son, the heir-apparent, was called the "lairdie", and the latter's son was known as the "lairdikie". Rotzoll (1910:210) gives lassockie, apparently from the West of Scotland; and also wyfockie, pursikie (212), dovekie (211), etc.

As well as those just mentioned there are a number of suffixes which are or were until recently, still semi-productive in Scots, although some of these are doubtful as diminutives. thus -(l)ing is mentioned in this context by Westergaard (55ff), Dieth (145) and Rotzoll (266ff), with a few examples from Scots. -kin is more productive. Dieth (144) gives the following examples from Buchan:

bitikinz 'little boots'

pi.tərkin 'Peterkin'

It is not productive enough apparently for Grant and Dixon to include it in their Manual of Modern Scots (1921) and Rotzoll gives no specifically Scottish examples. The suffix -ag from Scottish Gaelic (cf. relevant section of this appendix) is productive in North-Eastern Caithness (Murison 1977:33 and J. Aitken, pers.comm.)

e.g. bairnag

lassag

(Murison 1977:33)

A peculiar diminutive in Scots is eenie formed as follows:

ee 'eye' - een 'eyes' - eenie(s) 'eye + Plu + Dim (+ Plu)' (cf. Rotzoll 1910:181).

The "satzdeminutiv" is quite popular in NE Scots, but employing an accumulation of adjectives, rather than suffixes as only nouns and proper nouns can form diminutives in Scots.[15] In this way a phrase like a teenie weeny eenie in its cradlie is quite acceptable (ex. from Bulloch, 127).

From the examples it has already become clear that as in other languages Scots uses diminutive forms both for endearment (cf. above example) and contempt. Probably the most famous example of the latter is the Jacobite song "A wee bit German lairdie". Westergaard (1924:124ff) mentions a frequentative use of the -y and -ock suffixes in Scots, when added to verbs: "..., I venture to suggest that this is a case where the verbal -y is identical with the diminutive -y used in substantives, ...; and that the verbal -y, like the diminutive -ock, indicates the iteration of the act; ..." (126) and she gives the examples to hasty (126) and fussock, shulock (from shovel)(125).

West Frisian[1]

To form the synthetic diminutive in West Frisian, the following suffixes are used: -(k)je, -ke and -(t)sje. These suffixes make the gender of the word neuter, as in other Germanic languages. Suffixation is often accompanied by a change in the stem vowel. The distribution is as follows:

-ke is used after /f, v, p, b, m, s, z, r/ and after vowels other than /ə/; a final /ə/ is dropped before suffixation.

-tsje is used after /l, n/ -sje after /t, d/

-je after /x, ɣ, k/ -kje after /ŋ/

With words in /-st/ or /-ft/, two different suffixes may be used: e.g. bast 'rough character', bastje /basjə/ or baske. Blom (as quoted in de Vries 1924:113) claims that apart from these differences in distribution, there is another difference between -(t)sje, the most common suffix, and -ke - in the sense that -ke is more intimate and endearing. I have found no mention of this by other authors. Riemersma (1979:96-7) gives a number of words which do not conform to these rules of distribution e.g.:

tou	'string'	toutsje	'a bit of string'
gebou	'building'	geboutsje	etc.

He suggests Dutch influence as an explanation (all adult Frisian speakers are bilingual with Dutch). He also points out that foreign loans which end in a vowel often take -tsje, instead of the expected -ke. e.g.:

paraplú	'umbrella'	paraplútsje
auto	'car'	autootsje

In a few cases the suffix can be added to a shortened form of the noun. This is largely restricted to colloquial usage e.g.:

gymnastykskuon 'gymshoes' gimkes (-s is a plural marker).

Hoekema (1965) gives a fairly detailed analysis of the vowel changing processes that accompany diminutives in West Frisian. He explains that some diminutives are spelled differently from the stem, without an actual change in pronunciation.[2] Those that do show a change in pronunciation can be categorised as follows.

1. Changes in quantity

-/a:/ > /a/ e.g.:	daem	'dam'	damke	
	faem	'woman'	famke	'young girl, little girl'

/u:/>/u/:	ploech	'plough'	ploechje
	mûs	'mouse'	mûske
/y:/ > /y/:	drúf	'grape'	drúfke

In the last two cases, the spelling does not actually reflect the shortened vowel.

/ɛ:/ > /ɛ/:	bed	'bed'	bedtsje
	nest	'nest'	nestje
/i:/ > /i/:	briif	'letter'	bryfke
	piip	'pipe'	pypke
/ɔ:/ > /ɔ/:	rôk	'skirt'	rokje
	bân	'belt,band'	bantsje

2. Changes in quality

/u/ > /y/:	hûs	'house'	húske
	slûs	'sluice,lock'	slúske

(Here we could actually speak of umlaut.)

/uə/ > /uo/:	hoed	'hat'	huodtsje
	goes	'goose'	guoske
/Iə/ > /jɛ/:	beam	'tree'	beamke
	earm	'arm'	earmke
/iə/ > /j/	sie(d)	'seed'	siedtsje
	skiep	'sheep'	skiepke
/oə/ > /ua/:	koal	'cabbage'	koaltsje
	doar	'door'	doarke

So far, all examples have been nouns; however some adjectives and some adverbs can also form diminutives. The most common examples are:

sunich	'thrifty', 'soft, slow'
sunichjes	'thriftily; softly, slowly'
súntsjes	'softly, silently' (but *súnt)

Numerals can only form diminutives if they are used as nouns e.g.:

in kwartsje	'¼ of a guilder' (coin)		
tien	'ten'	tientsje	'10 guilders'
in ientsje in twake in trijke	'a nest with 1, 2, 3 eggs'		

Verbs can form diminutives to become what Frisian philologists call "deverbatives". The suffix softens, tones down or slows down the action somewhat, but does not appear to have a strong frequentative or iterative sense as in other languages, e.g.:

roeije	'to row'	roeikje	'row slowly'
		ruoikje	'row with short strokes'
		ruoikelje	
aaie	'to stroke'	aikje	more endearing; one would aikje a loved one or a favourite pet, etc.
driuwe	'to float'	driuwkje	'float around slowly'
		driuwkelje	
farre	'to sail'	farkje	'sail about a bit for fun'
		farkelje	

Hofmann (1961:113) does mention a few iterative verbal diminutives, but in relation to the subjective diminutive type these are much rarer in Frisian than in other languages with productive verbal diminutives: e.g.: draikje 'to turn around again and again'

Although I have found no evidence to support his view that "auch bei den Diminutiven könnte man daneben meist iterative Funktion vermuten".

Hypocoristics in Frisian often involve the addition of a -ko suffix (O Fri -ka) to form names like Eelko, Sicco, Wilco etc. These are now all lexicalised. De Vries (1924:112) mentions a Frisian -se

affective suffix, now largely unproductive, but possibly surviving on personal names like Ynse, Rins(e) etc. for men. Like Dutch, German, Danish etc. Frisian can use the adjective lyts 'small' as a kind of prefix to refer to a smaller version of the noun in question e.g.: hannel 'trade', lytshannel 'retail trade'.

Other uses of the Diminutive Suffix

The -(s)ke suffix can also be used to change a word referring to a male person into one referring to a female person.[3] When added to a noun denoting a profession, the suffixed form usually refers to the wife of the person involved in that profession. When added to a man's name it becomes a woman's name e.g.:

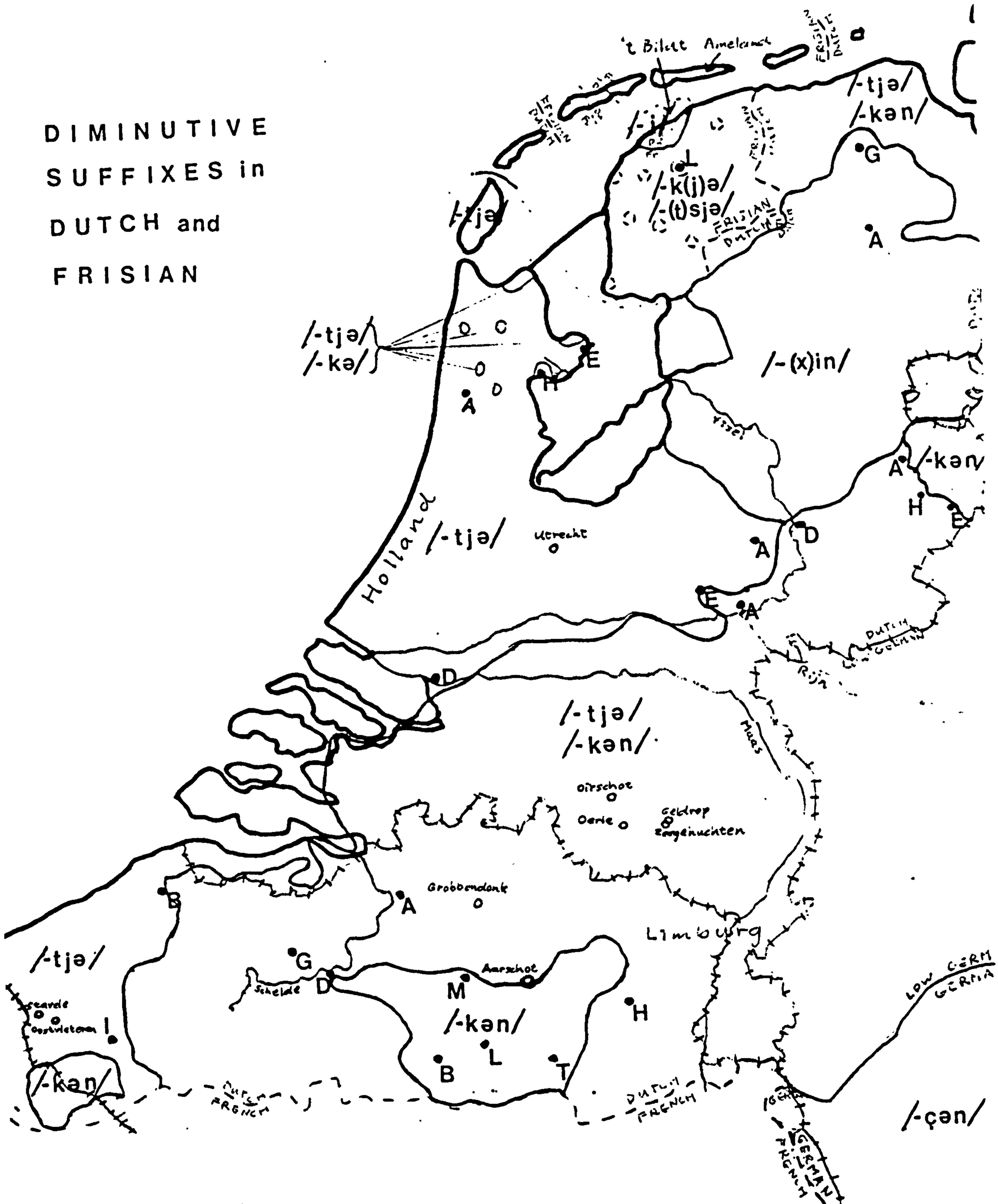
master	'school-master'	masterske	'wife of ....'
pastoar	'vicar'	pastoarske	'vicar's wife'
kastlein	'publican'	kastleinske	'publican's wife'

On personal names:

Klaas	-	Klaske
Sytze	-	Sytske
Anne	-	Anneke

etc.

DIMINUTIVE SUFFIXES in DUTCH and FRISIAN



river

coastline

DUTCH / FRISIAN language boundary

national border

isoglos

•B town

(map based on W.Pée,1936 ; W.König,1978 and G.G.Kloeke,1929)

Dutch

In modern standard Dutch one diminutive suffix is used almost to the exclusion of any others. This one suffix, for which we can use /-tjə/ as the underlying phonological form,[1] has a number of surface realizations. Once they are added to a noun, its gender becomes neuter. Many attempts have been made, especially since Cohen (1958), to construct the rules governing their selection; however only one of these seems to have been successful, as I show in Chapter 6 of this thesis. Simplified, the rules are as follows:[2]

-kje (/-kjə/) after most words in <-ing> (/-Iŋ/)

	paling	'eel'	palinkje
	koning	'king'	koninkje
	pakking	'gasket'	pakkinkje
but	leerling	'pupil'	leerlingetje

-pje: on the whole after Vm - where V can be specified either as /ə/ or as stressed and "ongedekt" 'uncovered' (Cohen 1958:43). Cohen includes in this class the following vowels /a, e, i, y, o, u/ and all diphthongs. Haverkamp-Lubbers and Kooij (1971:4-5) - (henceforth, H-L & K) specify these as [+tense] (they base their analysis on Chomsky and Halle (1968)), whereas Ewen (1978) refers to them as "long". From a diachronic point of view and from the point of view of the average native speaker, this last term is probably the most suitable e.g.:

schuim	'foam'	schuimpje	'meringue'
boom	'tree'	boompje	
bezem	'broom'	bezempje	

Cohen (1958:43) and H-L & K (1971:10) also include such words as

film /'fɪləm/ 'film' filmpje, worm /'wɔrəm/ 'worm' wormpje

bloem 'flower' bloempje has the alternative dim. bloemetje

These first two variants of the suffix can be considered the result of assimilation processes.

-je occurs after obstruents; however with some words ending in /p, b, γ^3/, preceded by a lax vowel (H-L & K:10), <-tje> is used with /ə/ insertion e.g.:

	pak	'suit; parcel'	pakje
	hap	'bite'	hapje
	mand	'basket'	mandje
but	kip	'chicken, hen'	kippetje

With some words both forms occur:

	pop	'doll'	popje
			poppetje
	weg	'road'	wegje
			weggetje

-tje occurs after vowels and glides e.g.:

ooi	'ewe'	ooitje
cadeau	'present'	cadeautje
auto	'car'	autootje
boerderij	'farm'	boerderijtje
gebouw	'building'	gebouwtje

-tje and -etje (/-ətjə/) are the most common forms of the suffix and it is their distribution that is most difficult to capture in simple rules. We have already seen some of the environments in which -tje is used. Both forms also often occur after a nasal or a liquid. If the preceding vowel is "long" (or "tense"),[4] -tje is used and if it is "short" (or "lax") -etje is used:

Paul		Paultje
deur	'door'	deurtje /dør/

bal	'ball'	balletje[5]
kar	'cart'	karretje
klem	'clamp'	klemmetje
zon	'sun'	zonnetje

The situation is already becoming more and more complicated and I will therefore refer once again to the discussion in Chapter 6, before we move on to the next topic.

Most recent writers on Dutch diminutives have recognised the fact that the addition of the diminutive suffix causes some consonants to palatalise in final position. Although Cohen (1958) does not mention this phenomenon in his brief but influential study, H-L & K (1971) and subsequent papers by Gussenhoven (1978:208), Ewen (1978:142) as well as Booij (1981:188) do discuss it. Gussenhoven proposes a palatalising rule which changes /t, s, n/ to /c, ʃ , ɳ / respectively in the environment ____j. Ewen mentions it briefly as it is marginal to his main topic of discussion. He gives the example:

gans /ɣans/ 'goose' gansje /ɣanʃə /

which he describes as the result of a low level phonological rule. In many cases, including the above example, palatalisation moves even further back and the realisation is commonly [ɣaɳʃə] . H-L & K mention a number of other minor rules. One of these deletes a final /t/ after /f, s, x/ when the suffix -je is added (cf. also Gussenhoven's T-deletion rule p.207) e.g.:

gracht /xraxt/ 'canal' grachtje /xraxjə/[6]

kast /kast/ 'cupboard, wardrobe' kastje /kasjə/

(examples from H-L & K (1971:10-11))

H-L & K (1971:10-11) do express some doubts as to the compulsory nature of this rule.[7]

Vowels may also be subject to change in response to the addition of a diminutive suffix. In standard Dutch, a number of words change their "short" vowel to its "long" equivalent[8] in either the plural or the diminutive or both. H-L & K mention the following examples, among others, in Appendix p.23:[9]

blad	'leaf'	blaadje
glas	'glass'	glaasje
pad	'path'	paadje[10]
schip	'ship'	scheepje
vat	'barrel'	vaatje

They also mention a group of words that form diminutives either with or without the vowel change, often but not always with a different meaning.

e.g. dak	'roof'	dakje	or	daakje	
gat	'hole'	gatje	'bottom'	gaatje	'little hole'
lot	'raffle-ticket'	lotje	or	lootje	
slot	'lock'	slotje	or	slootje	
staf	'rod, wand'	stafje	or	staafje[11]	

Tiersma (1980), whose paper deals with this phenomenon in some detail has also found 11 words whose diminutive singular has the "short" vowel and whose diminutive plural has the "long" vowel.

e.g. dag	'day'	dagje	daagjes (or: dagjes)
lid	'member'	lidje	leedjes

(Tiersma 1980:251) (For me, dak (see previous category) also belongs to this class.)

It has been suggested, by Gussenhoven (1978:211) among others, that for words like these the diminutive form is actually derived from the plural stem, rather than the more usual singular stem. This analysis is certainly appropriate for the diminutive plural forms of the old -er plurals.

Cohen (1958:44) gives:

kind	'child'	kinderen (plu)	kindje (dim), dim.plu: kindertjes

Although kindjes does exist it is less common.

ei	'egg', eieren , eitje	eiertjes (or: eitjes)	

The word blad mentioned above is of an intermediate type:

blad	plu: bladeren	dim: blaadje	dim.plu: blaadjes		

(cf. H-L & K, p.12)

And so is rad, albeit of a different type:

rad	'wheel'	/rɑt/ pl. raderen /radərə/	dim.sg. radertje /radərtjə/	
			dim.pl. radertjes /radərtjəs/	

Diminutives can be formed from categories other than nouns, although Dutch is less productive in this respect than many other languages. One hypocoristic form has already been given and this area is very fertile. The normal diminutive suffixes are used and in addition the <-ke> suffix, normally considered regional is quite productive in this field, as is <-ie>, especially in the west of the Netherlands.

e.g. Jan	Jantje		Piet	Pietje
Marianne	Marianneke[12]		Saskia	Saskiaatje
Maurits	Maupie			

Adjectives when diminutivised usually become nouns.

e.g. klein	'small'	kleintje	'a little one'

Numerals can form diminutives, usually to express cosiness, togetherness or endearment, etc.

e.g. één	'one'	in m'n eentje	'all alone (1st person)'
drie	'three'	met z'n drietjes	'the three of us'
vier	'four'	een Viertje	'a Renault 4' (endearing)

A number of adverbs occur in a diminutive form. They use the standard suffix, but add an -s to it. They may be derived from adjectives or from other adverbs. In the former case they have the

added function of a kind of adverbialising suffix.

e.g.	samen	'together'	saampjes	'together + dim'
	stil	'silent'	stilletjes	'silently'
	net	'proper, neat'	netjes	'proper, neatly, clean'
	fijn	'nice, pleasant'	fijntjes	'subtly tasteful or elegant, etc.'
	zacht	'soft'	zachtjes	'softly'
	straks	'soon'	strakjes	'soon + dim'

A recent form, used mainly by student peer-groups is:

	zat	'drunk' (coll.)	zatjes	'a bit drunk' [13]

Diminutives of verbs do exist, but these are confined exclusively to the language used in addressing children. They always occur in the construction $[V + dim + s]_V + [DOEN]_{Aux}$ (doen 'do').

e.g. etentjes doen 'eat + dim'

slaapjes doen 'sleep + dim'

The -s suffix, found also in other Germanic languages does exist in Dutch, although as far as I am aware it is hardly productive. It is limited mainly to some hypocoristics and kinship-terms.

e.g.	pappa, pappie	paps [14]
	mamma, mammie	mams
	Jakobus	Koos

There is no evidence that the -s involved in forming diminutives from verbs and adjectives or adverbs is related to this suffix. Their suffix is in fact a genitive marker which has come to be thought of as an adverbial suffix (Van Loey 1970:241). Van Loey (1970:232) mentions one dialect, that of Oerle (see map), which can form comparatives from these adverbs: netjezer, stillekezer, zachjezer, etc.

Van Haeringen (1952) draws our attention to a number of shortened or "concentrated" diminutives (see also van Loey 1970:231). These are of three types; those derived from ...

- compounds e.g. grootmoeder(tje) 'grandmother(dim)' - grootje 'granny'

  strijkorkest(je) 'string-orchestra(dim)' - strijkje

- verbs, analogous to happen 'bite', hap 'a bite', hapje 'little bite'.

  e.g. zeggen 'say' zegje 'that which one has to say'

- names of materials, substances, etc.

  e.g. bier 'beer' biertje 'a beer'

  ijs 'ice-cream' ijsje 'an ice-cream'

The usual domains in which diminutives are used are reflected in Dutch by a large number of everyday expressions involving diminutives.

- realm of children. Here hypocoristics abound and some diminutives - e.g. those of verbs - are limited to this area.

Fairy tales and the heroes of children's books and comic strips usually have diminutives:

Hans & Grietje	'Hansel and Gretel'
Roodkapje	'Little Red Ridinghood'
Doornroosje	'The Sleeping Beauty'
Kuifje	'Tintin'
Suske & Wiske	Belgian comic strip
Pietje Bell	Dutch children's book

Children play with soldaatjes, autootjes, etc. and they play games with names that take a diminutive form.

e.g.:	verstoppertje	'hide and seek'
	tikkertje	'tig'
	schooltje spelen	'playing school'
	vadertje en moedertje	'houses'

- lover's language is full of diminutives like schatje, liefje, etc.
- endearment is also reserved for relatives, e.g. mijn zusje 'my (little) sister', grootje 'granny'; for pets, for children, the old and by extension certain old objects. When the Dutch National Motor Museum moved its collection of old cars, a newspaper headline said: "Oudjes verhuisd" ('old + dim + pl moved').
- names of plants and flowers often have a diminutive form.

  e.g. viooltje 'violet' afrikaantje 'African violet'
  madeliefje 'daisy' vergeetmenietje 'forget-me-not'
  klavertje 'clover'

- the area of cosiness, familiarity, etc. is particularly rich in dims. in Dutch, where one drinks:

  een kopje koffie 'a cup+dim of coffee'
  een glaasje wijn 'a glass+dim of wine'
  een pilsje 'a lager+dim'
  een borreltje 'a (wee) dram'

One can eat:

  een koekje 'a biscuit' (hence Am.Eng. cookie)
  snoepje 'sweetie'
  beschuit met muisjes

Other familiar objects are also mostly known in their diminutive form.

e.g. amsterdammertje 'a small cast-iron pole used to keep cars off the pavements of the capital'
  kwartje, dubbeltje names of Dutch coins
  kapotje (coll.) 'sheath, condom'
  (zend)bakkie 'CB-set'

When one goes for a walk, one goes for een ommetje, een wandelingetje, een blokje om; or using a vehicle, one can make een tochtje, een uitje ('a small outing').

- Diminutives can also be used in a negative sense; to show contempt, for insults, etc.

e.g. lulletje rozewater 'wimp'

sijsjeslijmer 'slowcoach'

Pietje precies 'nit-picker'

op zijn janboerefluitjes 'devil-may-care'

keffertje 'small dog that barks constantly'

(keffen 'to produce a high-pitched bark')

A normal insult is reinforced by the use of its diminutive form:

", als jij daar eens voor zorgde, ellendelingetje?"

'what if you looked after that, you wretch+dim?' (from: Harry Mulisch, **Archibald Strohalm** 1951:31).

- Playing down. This can be used for two reasons.

(a) To make an object or action or length of time seem smaller than it is.

e.g. dat is een kat in het bakkie 'that's no problem at all'

kunt u een ogenblikje wachten? 'can you wait a moment?'

(b) To make something or someone that normally inspires fear or respect seem less awesome. For this reason many expressions relating to death, or insanity have a diminutive.

e.g. naar de barrebiesjes gaan 'to die'

het hoekje om gaan "

kassie zes zijn 'to be dead'

om kroosjes zijn "

van Jetje zijn 'to be mad'

van Lotje getikt "

een steekje los hebben "

In relation to hypocoristics one final point has to be made and this is the use of diminutive suffixes to derive female names from male personal names.[15] In Dutch this is less productive than in Frisian and it is largely confined to northern and north-eastern parts of the Netherlands.

e.g. Fred - Freddie Klaas - Klaasje
Hein - Heintje Klazien

As Kruisinga (1942:43) observes, these forms - unlike diminutives - are not neuter.

There are few Germanic languages that use diminutives more frequently than Dutch. There are regional differences of course and Kruisinga (1942:41) maintains that townspeople use far more diminutives than country-people. Van Haeringen (1975) believes that diminutives are on the decline in Standard Dutch. He bases this on a number of back-formations that have entered the language in recent decades. These involve previously non-existent non-diminutive forms derived from popular diminutives and frequently becoming at least as popular as them. He gives the following:

kiekje - kiek 'photograph'

flikje - flik 'chocolate drop'

mandarijntje - mandarijn 'mandarine'

spruitjes - spruiten 'Brussels sprouts' (heard in Utrecht)

pluimpje - pluim 'compliment'

klusje - klus 'odd job' - 'difficult job'

foefje - foef 'trick'

smoesje - smoes 'white lie'

relletje - rel 'disturbance' - 'riot'

baantje - baan 'part-time job' - 'job'

In addition to these I would like to propose the following example for inclusion:

mietje (< Mies a woman's name) 'sissy, queer, male homosexual', from this a non-dim. form miet 'male homosexual' can now be formed with a plural mieten.

Regional Dialects

From the map (p.241) it can be seen that the Dutch dialects use a number of suffixes other than /-tjə/. This map still gives a simplified picture as will become evident from some of the material introduced below. Even /-(x)in/, /-tjə/ and /-kən/ are cover terms for a suffix-type rather than the precise form in which this suffix occurs in a given area.

First of all it should be mentioned that the west of the Netherlands frequently uses the suffix <-ie> (/-i/) in more colloquial language. This is common in Holland and Utrecht - in the latter province it often takes the form /-xi/ - and has been linked by Kloeke (1923, 1929) with the /-in/ suffix of the north-eastern dialects.[16] This NE suffix is fairly widespread and extends as far north as the city of Groningen (not the rest of the province which has a stronger Frisian element) and as far east as the former county of Bentheim in the Federal Republic of Germany.

e.g. blɑt 'leaf' blɑtin buk 'book' bukin

After a vowel this suffix takes the form /-xin/.

e.g. kū 'cow' kūxin kumə 'bowl' kumə̆xin

(Examples from Kloeke 1929:81-82. I have retained his notation.)

In the southern half of the /-in/ area the diminutive is accompanied by umlaut of the stem vowel, where appropriate.

e.g. blāæxin 'leaf+dim' bükin 'book+dim'

kūxin 'cow+dim' kümǝxin 'bowl+dim'

(Kloeke 1929:82)

Umlaut with diminutives extends beyond this area. It is also found in the /-kən/ and the /-tjə/ + /-kən/ areas of the eastern border country as far South as Limburg and the boundary with French. It extends further East in the South than in the North, taking in most of Brabant (historical) until it reaches a change-over area running roughly through the middle of the Belgian provinces of Brabant and Antwerp and crossing the Dutch province of North-Brabant at some point, which I have not, unfortunately, been able to pinpoint exactly. Typical of this intermediate area are the dialects of Aarschot and Grobbendonk discussed by Pauwels (1938). In Aarschot many of the (older) umlauted forms have an alternative form without umlaut. Both forms have vowel reduction where possible.

e.g. lāf 'body' lɐfkə

but: ɣ(ə)las 'glass' ɣ(ə)laskə or ɣ(ə)lɒskə [17]

vās 'screw' vaskə or vɐskə

In the following example the umlauted form has developed a specialised meaning, separate from the non-umlauted form:

ɒas 'house' ɒazəkə 'little house' but: öskə 'lavatory'

(Pauwels 1938:3708)

In Grobbendonk the situation is different. Here the /-kə/ suffix is less dominant and allows /-tjə/ to be used as well with certain words. Umlaut has become specialised and is now used only with /-tjə/ as far as I can see, although my data are limited to those Pauwels provides.

e.g. zōn 'son' zōnəkə or zøntjə

hūt 'hat' hūtəkə or hytjə

Some specialisation has taken place here too.

e.g. ɣat 'hole, bum, bottom' ɣatəkə 'little bottom'

ɣøtjə 'little hole'

(Pauwels 1938:53)

I have to add that not every /-tjə / diminutive takes umlaut.

In the North-Brabant dialect of Oirschot, which is east of the intermediate area, umlaut is more common. This is also the case for the dialects of my home-town of Geldrop and Zesgehuchten e.g. bak 'bowl' bekske, man 'man' menneke, koek 'cake' kuukske 'biscuit'. Usually vowel-reduction takes place as well or instead of umlaut, Pée (1936:L239) gives efkes / ɛfkəs/ 'just' (from even /evə /) from Zesgehuchten.

There are however dialects in this area which do not use umlaut to the same extent; possibly due to western influence. The study by de Josselin de Jong (1903) of diminutives in Oirschot has many examples of umlaut, often accompanied by vowel shortening.

e.g. vod 'rag' vödje hoed 'hat' hoedje[19]

brōd ('loaf of) bread' breuike[18] or hüke

kroeg 'pub, cafe' krügske dag 'day' dĕgske

jong 'child, boy' jungske kaar 'cart, wagon' kèrreke

gaet 'goat' gètje

(de Josselin de Jong 1903:126-130)

In certain dialects, especially in Limburg, hypocoristics can be formed from some personal names by means of umlaut only. the next example is given by Leys (1968:115): Frans - Frens - Frenske (the diminutive suffix adds endearment).

When we move west of the Schelde river where the Flemish dialects are spoken,[20] umlaut is completely absent. In the West-Flemish dialect of Stavele and Oostvleteren, which Leys (1968) describes, the suffix takes the following forms (Leys' notation has been retained):

-igə after /l, r, m, n, b, d, v, z/

e.g. kapæl 'chapel' kapæligə

kɔmə 'bowl' kɔmigə

mandə 'basket' mandigə

-tšə after /w, l, r, m, n, p, f/ where overlap exists between this and the previous class, the choice of suffix is lexically conditioned (Leys 1968:168)

e.g. bo:m 'tree' bɔmtšə

šXɛp 'ship' šXɛptšə

bu:r 'farmer,peasant' burtšə

Some words can take either -igə or -tšə.

e.g. kam 'comb' kamigə or kamtšə

-jgə is used after a final vowel.

e.g. ku: 'cow' kujgə

bro:t '(loaf of) bread' brɔjgə

Certain words in -V can take -jgə or -tšə : ɔto 'car' ɔtojgə or ɔtotšə.

-gəis used after /j/.

e.g. vlo:jə 'flea' vlo:jgə

-šə occurs after /t/. After /ŋ, k, s, X/ either -šə or -šXə can be found.

e.g. ant 'hand' antšə

katə 'cat' katšə (after /ə/- deletion, /t/ becomes final)

klakə 'cap,hat' klakš(X)ə

ki:kŋ 'hen,chick' kikš(X)ə

No /ə/- insertion seems to exist in this dialect.

For hypocoristics the situation is very similar. The only differences are that /-w/ does not occur, that there are names in /-ʒ/ and that names in /-s/ may take -tšə or -š(X)ə.

e.g. Virginie - Viržigə Kamiel - Kamiltšə

Frans - frɑ̃:sXə

Roelandts (1956:115) mentions the use of -e(n) and -er as hypocoristic suffixes in the Southern dialects.

e.g. Hendrik Rik Rikker

Leopold Polder

both from Antwerp; and from Louvain:

Philip Flupper

sometimes both forms exist:

Damiaan Damme

Dammer

At the other end of the Dutch linguistic area a number of Dutch dialects exist in Friesland. One of these is that of the region known as 't Bildt. Its diminutives are quite different from those of the other "frisianised" dialects.[21] The only really detailed description of diminutives in this dialect is that by Buwalda (1958), who gives the following suffixes.[22]

-y (/i/) used after fricatives, after /k, p/ and after /t/ if it is preceded by a fricative, with the loss of the /t/.

e.g. das 'tie' dassy bak 'bowl' bakky

ruft 'nappy' ruffy

-sy after /t/ other than the above.

e.g. foet 'foot' foetsy hoed 'hat' hoedsy

-tsy after vowels, after /l, n, r/, with loss of /ə/ where appropriate.

e.g. slé 'sledge' sleetsy bolle 'bull' boltsy

After /m/ a number of suffixes are possible. Some words give a choice of suffix, with others only one is possible.

e.g. boom 'tree' boomtsy koem 'bowl' koempy
boompy koemechy

On the whole, -tsy is more common than -py, which has somewhat childish connotations, Buwalda (1958:64): "Bij it efterheaksel -py kin men hast tinke oan berne- of flaeitaal; it liket ús ta, dat it hwat "leafliker" oandocht as -tsy." ('with the suffix -py one can almost think of children's or flattering language; it seems to us that it feels a bit more endearing than -tsy')

He also suggests influence from Holland as a possible reason for the use of -py.

-chy is used after /ŋ/.

e.g. ding 'thing' dinchy tong 'tongue' tonchy

-(e)chy is becoming more and more popular in the dialect, although Buwalda does not give any clear rules for its distribution. All he says is that it is used "yn in stikmennich gefallen" ('in quite a few cases/, Buwalda p.64).

e.g. kar 'cart' karrechy stoep 'pavement' stoepechy

In some cases, as was shown above a form with this suffix has an alternative form with another suffix.

As well as suffixation, a long vowel is shortened where appropriate,

e.g. dâg 'day dachy.

Buwalda (1958:64) believes that these suffixes in /-i/ are a native creation. It would seem to me, however, that these suffixes - especially the increasingly popular -(e)chy - must be linked with similar forms to the east and south-east of the Frisian-speaking area (even a Frisian word like bolle 'bull' takes the dim. bollechie

in the city of Groningen). In addition there is the influence from Holland to consider. One of the reasons why 't Bildt is Dutch-speaking is its traditionally close links with Holland dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, when the area was settled from Holland.[23] Buwalda finds evidence that the /-i/ forms were used in the dialect as early as 1595 and 1636. De Vries (1925, 1928:139) gives evidence for the use of -chie(n) in Groningen in the first half of the 16th century, although admittedly the exact pronunciation at the time is difficult to ascertain (cf. de Vries 1932:42).

In addition there is some evidence that the diachronic changes turning -kijn > -txjen, which then led to the suffix -(x)ie(n), were actually influenced by Frisian (van Loey 1959:230). In conclusion, influence from the powerful cultural centres of Groningen and Holland and possible Frisian pressure seem perhaps more likely than a native innovation among the farmers of 't Bildt.

Afrikaans

One of the most striking aspects of diminutives in Afrikaans is their frequent use, even in relation to Dutch. The domains in which they are used are the same as Dutch and the forms of the suffix are very similar, on the whole, with the exception of the base form of the suffix which takes the form -ie, rather than -je. This is probably due to the dialects spoken by the original settlers, rather than any diachronic development of standard Dutch -je.

This suffix has the following allomorphs:

-jie used after <d> or <t>[1] e.g. bedjie 'little bed'

-etjie used after a short stresses vowel + /l, m, n, r/

e.g. rol 'ròll' rolletjie lam 'lamb' lammetjie

and also with monosyllabic words in -/ŋ/

e.g. ding 'thing' dingetjie

-kie is used in multisyllabic words in -/ŋ/

e.g. woning 'dwelling' woninkie

-pie is used on words in -/m/, preceded by a long vowel, a diphthong, an unstressed short vowel, a schwa, or /l/, /r/

e.g. pruim 'plum' pruimpie

besem 'broom' besempie

wurm 'worm' wurmpie

-tjie used after a vowel, schwa, or diphthong + /l, n, r/

e.g. saal 'hall' saaltjie

deksel 'cover, top' dekseltjie

kuil 'pit' kuiltjie

trein 'trash' treintjie

gebou 'building' geboutjie

-ie in all other cases

e.g. kop 'cup, head' koppie

huis 'house' huisie

There are some exceptions to these rules which are simplified.

Some words allow for a choice of suffixes

e.g. gevoel 'feeling' gevoeltjie, gevoeletjie

kool 'cabbage' kooltjie, koletjie

(Kempen 1940)

With words in /-m/, preceded by /u/ or /i/, the choice between -pie and -etjie is not phonologically conditioned, but seems to vary from one word to another.[2]

e.g. doem 'doom' doempie

kiem 'germ, bud' kiemetjie

Unlike Dutch, Afrikaans uses double diminutives, formed by an accumulation of two suffixes. Hoge (1932:14) gives the following examples:[3]

pappietjie 'Daddy + Dim'

sussietjie 'sister + Dim + Dim'

(suster > sus > sussie > sussietjie)

boompietjie 'tree + Dim + Dim'

vinkietjie 'finch + Dim + Dim' etc.

These function as a reinforced diminutive, but they are relatively rare. Another difference between Dutch and Afrikaans is that some diminutives which have become lexicalised in Afrikaans are still productive in Dutch (Kempen 1940:85ff):

AFRIKAANS	DUTCH
agurkie 'gherkin'	augurk - augurkje
kruinaeltjie 'clove'	kruidnagel - kruidnageltje
bessy 'berry'	bes - besje
muggie 'gnat'	mug - muggetje

Many words which do not normally form diminutives in Dutch do form them in Afrikaans (Kempen 1940:98). The main difference between Dutch and Afrikaans is the way in which more different lexical categories can form diminutives in Afrikaans. In Dutch, as we saw in the previous section, diminutives are formed from proper nouns and nouns as well as some adjectives, adverbs and numerals. In Afrikaans, diminutives are much more productive on these categories and, in addition, can be formed from pronouns, interjections and verbs.[4]

Adjectives:	eie	'own'	eietjie
	geel	'yellow'	geletjie
	oudste	'oldest'	oudstetjie

Pronouns: ek 'I' ekkie

ons 'we, us, our' onsie

Adverbs: pas 'just' passies

Numerals:[5] my drietjies skapies 'my three + Dim + Plu sheep + Dim + Plu'

(Van Marle 1978:59)

Interjections: ag toggie

Verbs: "Slapenstyd nadertjies, nag is aan't kommetjies, moedertjies wakies"

'the time to sleep approaches + Dim, the night is coming + Dim, mothers + Dim (are awake) + Dim'

(all examples from Hoge 1932:13-14 unless stated otherwise.

Van Marle (1978) explains this affix generalisation in relation to Dutch as follows: because of close communication between the Dutch settlers and the indigenous (Hottentot) population, a "contact" language developed, which was used by the native women who looked after the children of the colonists. The scenario then goes thus (Van Marle 1978:63):

1. The overgeneralisation of the grammatical patterns of the 'unreduced' language (i.e. Dutch) is one of the distinguishing features of the 'contact' variety;
2. The only affix that forms part of derivational morphology which is frequent in the 'baby talk' register is the diminutive suffix;
3. It was primarily the 'baby talk' used by the black 'contact' language speaking nurses in which many Afrikaans learning children were addressed.

In addition, Hottentot, uses a lot of diminutives (64). On the whole this explanation seems quite acceptable. My only disagreement with

Van Marle (1978) concerns the extent of the generalisation. Van Marle (58) states that in Dutch "the attachment of the diminutive suffix normally involves the transposition to the word class of nouns" and he provides a quote from Zaalberg (1953) to support this. The operative word is "normally", because "normally" this is indeed the case, as it is "normally" for Afrikaans. The domain of child language, however cannot be considered "normal" in this sense and although Afrikaans certainly goes a lot further than Dutch in this respect, nevertheless, Dutch, too allows diminutive formations in child language which it would not normally allow in the standard language. Some examples exist even in the standard language of words which do not become nouns when a diminutive suffix is added to them:

stil 'silent'	stilletjes 'silently'
wij samen 'we together'	wij saampjes 'we together + Dim'
fijn 'nice'	fijntjes 'nicely'
droog 'dry'	droogjes 'a bit dry'
zwak 'weak'	zwakjes 'a bit weak'
etc.	

The general points Van Marle makes are valid nonetheless.

German

For German we have to distinguish between the standard dialect and the regional dialects. In standard German, two diminutive suffixes have become established. These are -chen and -lein, where the former is identified primarily with the North and the centre of the country and the latter with the South. In principle both suffixes can form diminutives from any noun e.g.:

Haus	'house'	Häuschen,	Häuslein
Stadt	'city, town'	Städchen,	Städtlein
Hund	'dog'	Hündlein,	Hündchen
Mann	'man'	Männchen,	Männlein

On the whole -chen is more formal and -lein more colloquial on these nouns where either can be used (cf. König 1978:157). There are a few words, however, which can only take one of these suffixes.

Thus, if a noun ends in <l(e)> it takes -chen e.g.:

Stall	'stable'	Ställchen	

If a noun ends in <-ch>, <-g> or <-ng> it normally takes -lein (cf. Fleischer 1974:179).

Some diminutives have become lexicalised with a specialised meaning:

Frau	'woman, wife, Mrs'	Fräulein	'young girl, Miss'
(Magd	'maid')	Mädchen	'girl'

Some nouns cannot form diminutives: *Freundinchen (Seidel-Slotty 1947:24; also 6.2.1.1). This is in fact the case for all nouns which end in the feminine marker -in as Ettinger (1974:366-7) shows.

As can be seen from the above examples, suffixation is accompanied by umlaut of the stem vowel, where appropriate. It is also accompanied by a change in gender to neuter. Whether these phenomena are a faculty of the diminutive or of the suffix as a member of a class of suffixes with these effects is open to debate.[1] In some cases -chen is preceded by -el- or by -er-. -el- is itself a diminutive suffix, so the suffix -elchen could be considered a double suffix. Fleischer (1974:181) gives the following:

Ding	'thing'	Dingelchen	'little thing'
Ring	'ring'	Ringelchen	'little ring'
Wagen	'cart, car'	Wägelchen	'little cart, car'

In the cases involving -er- the situation is different. Here' the diminutive plural is formed by adding the suffix to the -er plural form of the base.

Kind	'child'	Kinderchen	'little children'
Ei	'egg'	Eierchen	'little eggs'

These forms usually exist side by side with a normal diminutive formed from the singular (cf. Fleischer 1974:180).

The two standard German diminutive suffixes reflect a much more complicated situation in the regional dialects, which use a great variety of suffixes. These can be grouped for the sake of simplicity into 4 general classes:

(1) -ke(n) prevalent in the Low German area of the North.

(2) -che(n) is the dominating type in central Germany.

(3) Various types of suffixes involving /l/ dominate the South.

(4) The suffixes involving /ŋ/: -ing in Mecklenburg and -ang in a small area along the lower Oder, now probably supplanted by Polish.[2]

For a more detailed account of their distribution I refer to the map in this thesis and to Wrede (1908) and König (1978:157) on whose work my map is based.

(1) -ke(n): Diminutives are far less common in the North than in the South. When used they take this suffix.[3] Normally -ken is accompanied by umlaut though not always e.g.:

mäken	'girl'
mädken	
kinneken	'little child'
kindeken	

(Grimm 1931:680-1)

Blömken 'little flower' (Keller 1961:317)

"Twee Snäpskes up'n Dagg is noog" 'two (wee) drams a day is enough' (Keller 327)

/ ʃtɔk/	'stick'	/ ʃtœksken/	'little stick'
/apel/	'apple'	/ ɛpelken/	'little apple'
/jɔŋ/	'boy'	/jɔŋken/	'little boy'

(Schumacher 1972:15-16)

Schuhmacher's examples are from Velbert in the Rhineland between Essen and DÜsseldorf, where both -ke(n) and -che(n) exist side by side. Their distribution is phonologically conditioned in this intermediate dialect. Schuhmacher (1972:15) gives the following rules:

1. DIM ⟶ sken/k _____
2. DIM ⟶ ʃen/ [alveolar] _____
3. DIM ⟶ ken / other _____

(2) -che(n) (/-ç ə n/ or /-ʃ ə n/): the dialect outlined above shows an intermediate system between -ke(n) and -che(n) e.g.:

/kan/	'jug'	/kɛnʃ en/	'little jug'
/bɛt/	'bed'	/bɛtʃ en/	'little bed'

(Schuhmacher 1972:16)

South from here in a central belt through Germany, -che(n) is the dominant suffix. This is the case for example in Luxemburgish e.g.: Schwanz 'tail', Schwänzchen 'little tail'; no gender change takes place in this dialect (Keller 1961:293). In Darmstadt the suffix takes the form /-ʃə/, spelt -sche. (-je after <s> and <sch>) e.g. Sack 'sack, bag', Säckelsche (Keller 197).

(3) The various -L suffixes take the following forms: -(l)i in Alemannic especially Swiss German and the Black Forest; -l in Austro-Bavarian;[5] -el in Alsace and a large area in the

NE part of the L-suffix area (see map); -le in Western Bavaria, Swabia and the extreme South-East of the German-speaking world and -la in a N-Central area roughly around Würzburg and in Silesia, where it is now probably extinct. These examples from Swiss German use -li or -eli:

Zurich: Möödeli 'manner, habits + Dim'

Papiir-Röleli 'rolls of paper + Dim'

(Keller 1961:73,75)

Bern: Lŭtli 'people + Dim'

Fränkli hypocoristic

(Keller 1961:109,111)

Zürich: Brööt1i 'little bread' bread roll

(Nieuwenhuis 1980:17)

Zürich: Hus 'house' Hüüsli (Baur 1969:13)

In Alsace the diminutive suffix is -(e)l:

Lied 'song' Liedl 'little song'

Hand 'hand' Handl 'little hand'

(Keller 1961:157)

In Austrian German the simple diminutive suffix -l has largely lost its diminutive force (see below): Dia'n 'girl' Dia'ndl 'little girl' (Keller 1961:244).

(4) The /-ŋ/ suffixes -ing and -ang are the rarest diminutive suffixes. They survive in Mecklenburg, where the use of diminutives in general is fairly rare, albeit more common than in neighbouring areas

e.g. Kint 'child' Kinting 'little child'

Anne 'Anne' Anning

(Kruisinga 1942:50)

Hoge (1932:7) mentions the following examples:

Vadding	'father + Dim'	Hüsing	'house + Dim'
Mudding	'mother + Dim'	Botting	'sandwich + Dim'
Döchting	'daughter + Dim'	säuting	'sweet + Dim' (Adj.)
Söhning	'son + Dim'	sachting	'soft + Dim' (Adj.)

And even interjections can form diminutives with -ing: Ach Götting 'O God + Dim'. Wrede (1908:107) mentions the small area where the suffix -ang/-an was used at the time. He gives no examples though. Of course, similar /-ŋ/ suffixes exist in English and Scandinavian.

Many of the regional suffixes have special plural forms.[6] To mention them all is beyond the scope of the present study as their number is so large; however, the following diagram gives some indication of the number of different suffix pairs involved:

sg	plu
-le	-ler -le -la -len -ling -lan -lich
-la	-la -lar -li -ala -erl -aln -che -erche -lich

I will just take -lich as an example. This diminutive plural suffix occurs in 4 small areas in Germany as well as in Yiddish (see map)

e.g. gänsle 'little goose' gans(e)lich 'little geese'

bretle 'little plank' bretlich (Grimm 1931:674-5)

Not only can nouns form diminutives in German but also adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, interjections etc. This facility is restricted to the regional dialects, however, and even they vary considerably as to which categories they allow to form diminutives. We already saw a few examples from Mecklenburg. Other dialects can do the same. Sieberer (1950-52:87-88) gives sachtchen and stillchen which have become lexicalised (cf. Dutch). He also gives examples from the language spoken to children: trinki 'drink + Dim' and the Austrian example waserl denn? 'what is it?'. Keller (1961:158) mentions wääsele? in Alsace (gloss as previous ex.). In Swiss German and Alsatian, diminutive verbs are frequently formed by means of -(e)le[7] (Keller 1961:82, 158) e.g.:

rägele 'to drizzle'

kechle 'to simmer' (< koche 'to cook')

Keller (197) also mentions soosche (< so, Darmstadt) and sooli (Swiss German) meaning 'well, that's done', 'here you are'. Kruisinga (1942:48) gives duchen (du 'you' (T-form)). By diminutivising a large number of words within one phrase or sentence as a kind of prosody, the Southern dialects can form what Sieberer (1950-52:88) calls "Satzdeminuierung". This is especially common in addressing children e.g.: 't kinneken is hennefalleken 'the child + Dim has fallen + Dim' (Flechsig 1954:58).

One point which has been ignored so far is the fact that many of the Southern dialects have a two-stage diminutive system, where next to the normal diminutive, there is an intensified diminutive. Wrede (1908:79,118) briefly mentions this for Bavarian.[8] Keller (1961:244) reports for Upper Austrian that "The primary diminutive suffix -l has now hardly any diminutive force". The suffix -al has taken over the affectionate uses of the diminutive:

Dia'n 'girl' > Dia'ndl > Dia'ndal

Keller also gives examples of a two-stage system from Lower Alsace:

Hand 'hand' > Handl > Handele (pp157-8)

and Darmstadt:

Hund 'dog' > Hindsche > Hundelsche (197)

In Swiss German the more intimate -eli suffix could also be considered as an intensified diminutive next to -(l)i.

Not only do the Southern dialects show a greater variety in diminutive formations than the Low German dialects of the North; diminutives are also much more frequently used, as one moves South, through the German speech community. On the whole Low German is relatively free from diminutives especially a large area around Lüneburg. The exceptions are Mecklenburg - Vorpommern where they are slightly more common, and according to Flechsig (1954), the same is true for Eastphalia. As one moves South, their frequency increases until in Austrian and Swiss German they are so common that they are generally considered to be a typical marker of these dialects.

The diminutive suffixes are also used to form hypocoristics and some examples have already been given. Other methods of forming hypocoristics are used as well. A common procedure is by truncating the stem:

Auguste Guste

Gīsela Gisi

To this a number of suffixes can be attached. For his Bavarian dialect, Steininger(1982:309) gives 14 different types of hypocoristic formation e.g.:

Angēlika > Likei, Likachei, Angélikachei, Angēlique, etc.

Joseph > Sepp, Seppö, Seppei etc.

There are two specifically hypocoristic suffixes, -z and -o which are more widespread in German e.g.: Fritz, Heinz, Cunz, Götz (Grimm 1831:689 and Kruisinga 1942:48); Hanno < Johan (Kruisinga 1942:51); also Heino etc. In former Frisian speaking parts, Frisian hypocoristics in -o still occur Sicco etc. (cf. Frisian section). Yet another use of the diminutive suffixes is as a feminine marker. This too is restricted to a few dialects and has now largely disappeared. Flechsig (1954:53) mentions Pastörske 'the vicar's wife' (< Pastor) recorded in 1730. In addition to the native suffixes Fleischer (1974:181) lists

-ine:	Viola	Violine
-ette:	Oper	Operette
	Stiefel	Stiefelette
	'boot'	'bottine'
-it:	Meteor	Meteorit

These examples seem to be lexicalised however and one may wonder whether they should be included at all.

Finally, there is one more form that deserves a mention and this is the "prefix" Klein-[9] used productively in compound nouns and referring to small size:

Kleinwagen	'small car'
Kleinstadt	'small town'
Kleinbauer	'small farmer'
Kleinbetrieb	'small business'
Kleinbürger	'petit bourgeois'

etc.

An intensified form of this is Kleinst- e.g.:

Kleinstwagen 'micro-car' Kleinstwohnung 'flatlet'

Yiddish

The Yiddish dialects are usually divided into three major groups: western Yiddish, central Yiddish and eastern Yiddish. Within these, northeastern Yiddish is the most important, both because of its large number of speakers and because of its greatest deviation from the Germanic "norm". I will therefore start with a discussion of diminutives in the north-eastern dialect. Later on I will indicate certain points where some of the other dialects differ. Most examples for NEY are taken from Birnbaum (1979:238-240). The normal diminutive-marker in NEY is an -L suffix /l/ .

e.g. der vint - dus vintl 'the wind - the breeze'

(As in the other Germanic languages, a gender-change to neuter also takes place.)

This -L suffix is used with monosyllables ending in a consonant other than /l/ and with disyllabics ending in<-er>(Birnbaum 238) "Where appropriate" (Birnbaum 238) vowel mutation takes place as well, as in most German dialects.

e.g. dus lid	-	dus lídl	'song'
dus kalb	-	dus kélbl	'calf'
der rok	-	dus rékl	'jacket'
di ́stuut	-	dus ́stéitl	'town'
der ruuv	-	dus réivl	'rabbi'
di toxter	-	dus téxterl	'daughter'
dus puunym	-	dus péinyml	'face'

Birnbaum does point out, however, that mutation with disyllabic words is rare.

If the final consonant of the noun is /l/ then the suffix is preceded by -(e)x-:

e.g. di miil - dus miilexl 'mill'

dus kul - dus kélexl 'voice'

Very rarely an alternative suffix is used in these cases: -(e)x+n

e.g. dus miilexn

dus kélexn

Max Weinreich also mentions this -n suffix (621), but unfortunately he does not go into its history. Apparently the -exn and -exl are interchangeable. When a noun ends in -n an epenthetic /d/ develops before the suffix and this is marked in the spelling. In some cases the -n is dropped instead.

e.g. di pén - dus péndl 'pen'

der štékn - dus štékl 'stick'

Where a word ends in a vowel, diphthong or syllabic /ɨ/, the suffix -ale/-ele can be used to form diminutives (about other uses of this suffix, see below)

e.g. dus knii - dus kniiale 'knee'

dus kniiele

der šnai - dus šnaiale 'snow' - 'snowflake'

dus šnaiele

der foigl - dus faigele 'bird'

dus faigale

Diminutive Intensifier[1]

Like the Slavic languages, Yiddish (at least NEY) has a two-stage diminutive system. Where the normal diminutive is not endearing (or little) enough a diminutive intensifier can be used to express even greater endearment (or even smaller size). The suffix used for this dim.int. is again -ele/-ale;[2] again the forms are all neuter in gender.

e.g. dus houz — 'the house'

dus haazl — 'the little house'

dus haazele, dus haazale — 'the very (nice) little house'

der briiv - dus briivele — 'the little letter'

der zamd - dus zémdele — 'the sand' - the tiny grain of sand'

dus lid - dus lidele — 'the nice little song'

nyšumele! - 'darling!' (lit: 'little soul')

In certain words some additional processes take place; for example the loss of the unstressed vowel in:

di miil - dus miilexl - dus miilxele

Plural

In the plural, both stages of the diminutive use the same suffix -lex.[3] The intensified form retains its -e- before the suffix.

e.g. der vint — 'the wind'

dus vintl — 'the breeze'

di vintlex — 'the breezes'

dus vintele — 'the gentle breeze'

di vintelex — 'the gentle breezes'

di kelblex — 'the little calves'

draj jorelex — 'three short years'

Diminutives in -exn use the old Germanic plural in -r:

dus miilexn - di miilexer

Words of Hebrew origin add the Germanic plural suffix -lex to their Hebrew plural form in -YM /im/.

e.g. der nign — 'the tune' — di nigjjnym 'the tunes'

dus nigndl — 'the little tune' — di nigjjnymlex 'the little tunes'

Birnbaum adds (239) "By analogy, a few non-Semitic nouns also have this plural formation" and he cites the example:

dus kind

di kinder

di kinderlex 'the little children'

I believe that this has nothing to do with analogy or with Hebrew plurals. This is simply another remnant of the old Germanic plural in -r, which later on, when the significance of the -r was lost, adopted a different plural suffix. In other Germanic languages the -en plural was added, as in 'children' in English or 'kinderen' in Dutch. In Yiddish, as in Dutch, the diminutive plural is also added to this fossilised plural form:

kinder-lex

Or in Dutch:

kinder-tjes[4]

As in most languages, the Yiddish diminutive suffixes are used primarily to express emotion, positive or negative. The examples we have seen so far have expressed positive emotions. Negative emotions can also be expressed. Diminutives then usually express contempt or devaluation. The following examples were supplied by Roger Lass:

majzl-drek 'mouse (+dim)shit' = something really insignificant.

šmekl-šleper 'prick(+dim)puller' = someone trivial, contemptible (šmok-šmekl).[5]

There is another NEY affix, which deserves our attention. Although it is not, strictly speaking a diminutive affix, it does express positive, endearing features. It takes the form of a suffix -ink and occurs in adjectives. It is slotted in between the stem and the inflexional suffix.

e.g. ir klejninker pistojl 'her little(+dim) pistol'

an ojto fulinkn mit wofn 'a car full(+dim) of weapons'

gemutikt fun klejninken nitsochn 'encouraged by the little (+dim) victory'

(Above examples all from a song by Hirsch Glik (1920-1944) Germanised spelling.) Uriel Weinreich (1958:379) traces these infixes back to Slavic, although he does mention one (eastern) dialect of German that uses them.[6] He also gives some examples of verbs and even adverbs using this infix:

śĺóf-ink-en 'to sleep' (nursery talk)

pamél-ink-es 'slowly' (endearing)

We can assume that when used with a term of diminution (e.g. klejn) its endearing effect is very strong, especially if a noun+dim.int. follows. But even about groys-ink-er, Max Weinreich (621) says; "(it) expresses specific positive feelings that are caused by the bigness".

Other Dialects

One of the few surviving dialects of western Yiddish is that of Alsace. For this, Zuckerman (1969:56) lists the following suffixes:

dim.sg. -(ə)lə

dim.pl. -(ə)liç [7]

He does not mention the presence of an intensified diminutive, so I assume that it does not exist. -lə is used after a vowel; -ələ after <-l>. Elsewhere they vary. The plural versions are used in a similar way.

e.g. (examples from Zuckerman)

[kʰI sə] - [kʰI sələ] 'pillow'

mokem - [mɔugəmlə] 'place' - 'small town'

[mɔul] - [majlələ] 'mouth'

plural

[majlələ] - [majləliç]

Let me point out, by the way, that the Alsace German suffixes are -le/-la for singular and the plural marker is -r. The situation in Swiss Yiddish seems to have been the same. Guggenheim-Grünberg (1969) found one of its last speakers[8] and in the text in her article, there are two diminutives; one singular and one plural (II):

khindəweegəle 'little pram'
chaləbrëjtliç = a white Sabbath-bread (+dim.pl.)

Of course we cannot base a detailed analysis on these two examples, but it is interesting that they seem to follow the same pattern as the examples from Alsace. One example from Voorzanger & Polak (1915:20) indicates that in Dutch Yiddish, at least in this one example, the more northern German suffix was used:[9]

"... ich wil amohl mein bichelche von die ginuch was ich hob, laaienen." 'I don't mind lending anyone a little bit of the plenty I have'

This is apparently fairly typical for the Yiddish dialects of the Dutch-Low German area and even for most of central and SE Yiddish, where the following suffixes prevail:

-(t)ye -še -(l)çe[10]

e.g. tishye 'little table' shtibye 'little room'
lefltye 'little spoon' fi:sçe-fi:sçer 'little foot/feet' (Francfort, M. Weinreich, 552)[11]

Laudau (1896/7) mentions yet another Slavic suffix. This one is used in children's language only and originates in Polish:

Harts Hartsinju
Moiši Moišinju

This -nju is primarily a form of endearment (Landau p.48).

Weinreich (1980:514) says the following about these:

> "In contemporary western Yiddish (Holland, Alsace, Switzerland) we have -she, such as /gezindše/ (family), and in central Yiddish there is a considerable strip, roughly from Kalisz to Rypin, where the diminutive is -ye, -tye..... Synchronously we may want to identify the consonant in the Dutch Yiddish suffix with /š/ and the consonant in the diminutive suffix of a part of central Yiddish with /(t)j/; but historically both go back, like the western Yiddish š in ikh, rekht, to ç."

He summarises the situation on p.521:

> "..., there are two basic diminutive suffixes in the territory of German and Dutch that are identical in meaning. Aside from less important variants, they can be called the l type and the ch type; the first is characteristic of upper German, the second of central German, Low German and Dutch.[12]
>
> (see also pp.515 & 441).

As we saw above, Weinreich's statement on page 514 that the -she suffix is typical for west Yiddish is an overgeneralisation, as in Alsace and Switzerland the High German suffixes were in use. It is true, though, that the northern suffixes were used in many dialects of western and central Yiddish.

Hypocoristic Use of Suffixes

Most of the diminutive suffixes are also used for hypocoristic derivation. Edward Stankiewicz (1969:267-283) analyses these in some detail and from his article are the following examples.

With -L (275):

jankef - jankl (-Jankele)

jude - judl

šmarje - šmerl (note umlaut in this example)

fride - fridl

gite - gitl

mirjam - mirl

With -ČE (277/8):

dovid - dovče

perec - perče

blume - blumče

dine - dinče

Some other suffixes are also used, as well as palatalization in some cases (Stankiewicz 1969:278). These are not diminutive suffixes in the same sense as the above examples, however.

Danish

The Scandinavian languages, like English are often considered to be relatively poor from the point of view of diminutives. Kristen Møller (1943), however, gives a detailed analysis of the various types of diminutives that do still exist in Danish. She discusses both analytic and synthetic diminutives and I will consider both because of the special way they are used in Danish. Of the synthetic diminutives, those formed with the suffix -s(e)[1] are still productive, primarily in child language. It is used for the following (the numbers refer to pages in Møller 1943).

- domestic animals.

e.g. Kis, Kisse, Pus for cats (Kat(te) 'cat') (12)

Lam 'lamb' Lamse 'little lamb' (13)

- kinship terms and terms for addressing children.

e.g. Mand 'man' Mandse 'little man' (18)

Mama Mams (19)

Papa Paps(e) (19)

Søster 'sister' Sysse, Søsse (20)

- hypocoristics

e.g. Elisabeth - Lis, Lisse (16)

Kirsten, Kirstine - Kis, Kisse (16)

Lars - Las, Lasse (17)

Jens - Jense (17)

... and even surnames:

Bang - smaa Bangser 'the Bang children' (18)

- body parts of children

e.g. Arm - Armse (20)

Fod 'foot' - Fosse, Fusse 'little foot' (20)

And Møller has even found: Bungalowser (22)

In child language, adjectives and verbs are also diminutivised with this suffix.

e.g. begavet 'talented, gifted' begavset (24)

sove 'sleep'(v) sovse (30)

bide 'bite'(v) bidse (30)

A few other suffixes involving /ə/ and /i/ are used for hypocoristics only:

-e/-i: Kirsten - Kitte

Gudrun - Gudde

Karl - Kalle

Jens - Jensi

-(e)n: Gudrun - Gudden

Tytte - Tytten

-(e)r: Tytte - Tytter

Jens - Jenner

Two older suffixes survive in Danish in various degrees of fossilisation. -(l)ing is no longer productive, although many lexicalised forms survive in regional dialects. A few survive in the standard dialect.

e.g. Mandse, Mand 'man, husband' Mandsling (99)

And many animal names (cf. English).

e.g. Gæsling 'gosling' (103)

Mysling 'little, young sparrow' (103)

Slightly more productive in that it can sometimes be found in poetry, is the suffix -lil(le) e.g. "Hvor stedes du, min Gertrudlil?" 'where are you my little Gertrud?' (111)

(Møller quotes from Den gamle Adam by H. Pontoppidan). This suffix is still quite common in Jutland, especially in hypocoristics such as Kristenlil or Marenlil (Møller 1943:111). In older Danish, forms like Pigelil (Pige 'girl'), Morlille (Mor 'mother') and Farlille (Far 'father') were relatively productive. Its origin must lie in the adjective lille 'little' used attributively and becoming attached to a noun. Similar forms still exist in Swedish although they are somewhat archaic; e.g.

Kirstin lilla and "min gubbe lilla" (from Strindberg) (116).

In the presence of relatively non-productive suffixes, the analytic diminutive has gained in importance and in this respect Danish is similar to English. Like English Danish has two adjectives lille (sg) and smaa (pl) 'small, little'. lille has strong emotional connotations as Møller states: ".. et udpræget følelsesbetonet lille+Subst..."[2](65)

e.g. vent et lille Øjeblik 'wait a short while'

en lille Tur til byen 'a short trip to town'

en lille Hest 'a little horse' (speaking to children)

en lille Sammenkomst 'a little meeting' (57)

spis nu din lille Kage 'eat now your little biscuit' (58)

Most of these examples are taken from the domain of children where the analytic diminutive is frequently used.

Often it is combined with the -s(e) suffix.

e.g. den lille Mavse 'the little stomach'

det bitte Lamse 'the little lamb' (bitte 'little' in Jutland dialect)(58)

Like the suffix it is frequently used with kinship terms and hypocoristics.

e.g. lille Far 'little father' (61)

lille Marie (62)

More interesting from our point of view are the Danish compounds involving lille. We have already seen the "suffixed" forms, but lille as the first member of a compound is quite often used.[3]

e.g. lille Bror > Lillebror 'little brother' (63)

lille Søster > Lillesøster 'little sister' (63)

lille Peter > Lillepeter 'little Peter' (63)

Similar compounds with smaa are also quite common in the plural:

e.g. smaa Piger - Smaapiger 'small girls' (64)

Smaabyger 'small rain-showers'

Smaapenge 'change' (65)

Icelandic

Like the other Nordic languages, Icelandic is often considered to be without a productive diminutive system.

> "Im allgemeinen herrscht die Ansicht, dass es in allen nordischen Sprachen nur sehr wenige Diminutive gebe und dass diese nicht wesentlich zum Character der Sprache beitrügen." (Grönke 1954:2)

This attitude was partly changed by the publication of Møller (1943) on Danish and also by Grönke (1954) on Icelandic. Both are very thorough analyses of those diminutives that do exist in these respective languages.

Grönke has found a large number of suffixes which are capable of carrying some diminutive sense: -ng- (-ungur, -ungi, -ingur, -ingi, -ing); -l- (-ill,-li, -la, -aldur, -aldi, -ald, -ildi); -l- + -ng- (-lungur, -lingur, -lingi); -s- (-si, -sa); -s- + -l- (-sli, -sla); -n- (-ni, -na, -ini); -s- + -n- (-sni, -sna); -k- (-kur, -ki, -ka); -pa[4]; -i; -a; -ó (Grönke, 59-78).

Some specialisation has taken place. Thus, -lingur is popular for children and young animals, etc; -si and -sa are also used for domestic animals; -sli/-sla are used for nice little objects; -n- suffixes are in fact used for concrete and abstract formations, but can sometimes be used for diminutives; -k- diminutives are hypocoristics, as are -i and -a. -ó is a recent suffix, used in slang words.

These suffixes are often accompanied by morphophonemic changes and they are often attached to a shortened stem. Grönke has found 6 types of sound-changes involved in diminutive formations (85-92):

1. shortening and opening of the stem vowel; a diphthong becomes monophthongised.

e.g. bŏfi - bobbi

2. lengthening of the final consonant of the stem before -i and -a.

e.g. Sumarliði - Summi

3. assimilation of the final consonant in the base-word before -i and -a or assimilation with the -k-, -l- and -s- suffixes.

e.g. botn - botnsi - bossi

4. insertion of a /b/ after a final nasal.

e.g. Samson - Sambi

5. change of an initial þ to -t.

e.g. þórarinn - Tóti

6. deletion of r in Cr initial clusters.

e.g. Brynjólfur - Bynni

Many of these in fact occur simultaneously.

Grönke distinguishes three different uses for diminutives in Icelandic (p6).

- Quantitative: a reduction in size
- Qualitative: a reduction in value or worth
- Affective: Grönke includes the hypocoristic forms under this heading as well as other affective diminutives. I prefer to keep them separate because of their specialised nature.

Both the qualitative and affective diminutives have emotional connotations. Those of the qualitative forms are often derogatory. The quantitative diminutives are on the whole used for animals and objects, whereas the qualitative diminutives are primarily used for people. Affective diminutives are often used for domestic animals as well as familiar tools and other objects, but natural phenomena can also be diminutivised.

e.g. Quantitative:

gris	'pig'	grislingur	'little/young pig'
ey	'island'	eyja	'little island'
köttur	'cat'	ketlingur	'kitten'
kot	'hut'	kytja	'little hut'
bit	'bit, piece'	biti[5]	'little bit'
smalur	'small, narrow'	smálki	'a small object'
ostur	'cheese'	ystingur	'cheese-curds'

In the last example, the meaning seems to refer to something that is not quite cheese, but on its way to be just that. With this sense many scientific terms are coined in modern Icelandic (p.17).

e.g. bagall 'rod' baglingur 'bacterium'

Qualitative

e.g. karl 'man, fellow' kerling 'woman, old woman' (19-20)

This has depreciatory or compassionate connotations, whereas kerla is always endearing.

grönn	'thin'	grennla	'thin woman'
strákur	'boy, chap'	stráksi	'little chap'
		stráklingur	'little chap'
-tján	'-teen'	tjáningur	'teenager'
hind	'hind'	hindla	'thin, infertile hind'

There are a large number of names for 'the devil' using a diminutive suffix.

e.g. djöfull - djöfsi, djefsi, defsi, déssi, déli, deli, dell, etc.
(Grönke, 32-33)

Affective

e.g. bófi	'boy'	bobbi	'little boy'
fræendkona	'aunt'	fræenka	'little aunt, auntie'
kýr	'cow'	kusli	'calf'
már	'seagull'	másí	'little seagull'
bátur	'boat'	bátsi	'little boat'
sær	'sea, lake'	sjósi	endearing or placating diminutive
		sæsi	endearing or placating diminutive
veröld	'world'	versa	as above
		versla	as above

very often used for children's body-parts:

botn	'bottom'	bossi	'little bottom, bottie'
túta	'something pointed'	tútla	'little penis'

Hypocoristics are very common and very important in Icelandic, so much so that in many cases the normal form of a name is never even used at all.

e.g. Sigurður - Siggi

Sigríður - Sigga

Guðmundur - Gvendur

Baldvin, Baldur - Baldi, Balli

Ingibjörg - Imba

Similar endearing forms are coined for animals ...

e.g. grár 'grey' Grási, Grása name for a horse

... and for other nationalities:

e.g. baun 'bean' (= Dane) bauni

Amerikani - kani

On the whole these Icelandic diminutives are only semi-productive in that not every noun or proper name can be diminutivised, but a sizeable number can be so treated. Finally, Grönke mentions a number of compound types with a certain diminutive sense: "Sie wirken verkleinernd, herabsetzend oder kosend und zwar in fast allen im Vorhergehenden aufgezeigten Nuancierungen." (94)

e.g. karlskinn 'poor guy, poor devil' (skinn 'skin')

stundarkorn 'a short moment/while' (stund 'hour, while'; korn 'grain')

bátskríli 'tiny little boat' (kríli 'tiny object')

Celtic

Four Celtic languages will be considered. Scottish Gaelic in some detail; Irish, Welsh and Breton more briefly. One problem inherent in the socio-political situation in which the Celtic languages find themselves is the lack of a standard dialect or accent. For this reason some dialect variation has to be taken into account. As

far as possible dialect variation will be pointed out, but this can never be comprehensive of course.

Scottish Gaelic[1]

Scottish Gaelic uses two suffixes - and variations of them - to form diminutives. These are -an for masculine words and -ag for feminine words.

e.g.	bord	'a table'	bordan	'a little table'
	loch	'a loch'	lochan	'a little loch'
	càrn	'a cairn'	càrnan	'a little cairn'
	balach	'a boy'	balachan	'a little boy'
	allt	'a stream, burn'	alltan	'a little burn'
	duine	'a man'	duineachan	'a little man'
	duan	'a song'	duanag	'a little song'
	mùrla	'a creel'	mùrlag	'a small type of creel'
	luch	'a mouse'	luchag	'a little mouse'
	nighean	'a daughter, girl'	nighneag	'a little daughter, a little girl'
	srad	'a spark'	sradag	'a little spark'

The same suffixes are very often used to form hypocoristics. In the older language (Old Irish) many saints had a shortened form of their name as a hypocorism: Maol-rua - Mo-choë

At the same time suffixes were used to form hypocorisms, usually in fact of a type with double suffix. e.g. Aodh - Aodhagan

Forms of this type survive in South Uist and Barra and are frequently used there. e.g. Iain - Iagan

Dòmhnall - Dòmhgan

In the other dialects forms with the modern single suffix are more common. Women's names are more often treated in this way than men's.

e.g. Dòmhnall - Dòmhnallan

Seon - Seonaidh (possibly influenced by Eng. Johnny)

Niall - Niolaidh (possibly influenced by Eng/Scot -ie suffix)

Beath - Beathag

Ceit - Ceiteag

Mór - Mórag

In Tiree the name Maiseag is very common.

A number of nouns only survive in their diminutive form; for example piseag 'kitten', which now has cat as its non-diminutive counterpart; or saidh, a kind of fish, which has ucas or ucsa as its non-diminutive equivalent. In lèabag or leóbag 'a flounder' no connection is now made with lèab 'a corner of cloth'. Another example is dobhran 'an otter' which originated as follows: dobhar 'water' (now extinct) plus cù 'a dog' — dobhar-chù lit. 'water dog' — shortened hypocoristic form dobhran. This last example seems to be part of a group of nouns derived from other nouns by means of a diminutive suffix, but primarily with the sense of 'possessing the quality of the noun from which it is derived' (cf. 7.4). An example in the modern language is:

bròn	'sorrow'	brònag	'woman who is sorrowful'
		brònean	'man who is sorrowful'

In a similar way, the diminutive suffixes can be used to derive nouns from adjectives.

e.g. caomh	'dear'	caomhag	'a dear person' (f)
		caomhan	'a dear person' (m)
lurach	'beautiful'	lurag	'a beautiful person'
		luran	'a beautiful person'
milis	'sweet'	milseag	'a sweet little thing'
		milsean	'a sweet little thing'

"The suffix makes it into a noun and makes it more endearing and diminuates it" (Donald Meek, personal communication)

Alternatively, the suffixes can be used to turn a noun into an adjective. Again retaining certain emotional connotations of the diminutive.

e.g. cabhag 'haste' . cabhagach 'hurried'

The use of a diminutive in Gaelic has the effect of adding human interest, to "liven it up" (Donald Meek); thus gleannan is a much more friendly place than gleann.

The most common subjects for diminutives are:

- animals, especially domestic e.g. oircean 'piglet'
- people, and body parts etc, for endearment e.g. balachan
- geographical and environmental features e.g. cnoc 'a hill'
  cnocan 'a hillock'
  beann 'a mountain' binnean 'a little mountain'
- personal names; hypocoristics.
- domestic and familiar objects, tools, food, etc.

e.g. rolagan lit. 'rollocks' rolls of fluffed out wool; part of wool preparation. (Grant 1961:233)

crùisgean 'a kind of small oil lamp, cruisie'

Diminutives are often accompanied by the adjectives beag, mion, or bìodach/bìdeach meaning 'small', although they sound perfectly acceptable without them. Bìodach can also be added in addition to beag.

e.g. balachan beag bìodach 'a teeny-weeny boy'

beag can itself take a diminutive suffix, however this is then used in one of its older meanings of a collective suffix.

e.g. beagan 'a little, a small amount'

mór 'big, large' mòran 'much, a lot'

àrd 'high' àrdan 'pride'

But these are rare now.

Even beag does seem to have certain emotional connotations, though far less so than the suffixes.

e.g. a'chreag bheag 'the little/small rock'

There are a few examples of adverbs forming diminutives, as in the following examples from Tiree:

seo 'here' seothachan

sud 'there' sudachan

These diminutives sound "more friendly, less distant" (Donald Meek)

Within Scottish Gaelic, there is considerable variation from one dialect to the other concerning the use of diminutives. East Sutherland Gaelic, for example, uses more diminutives than other dialects. Some forms occur in some dialects and not in others, or have a different meaning from one dialect to another, as is shown by the words for 'girl':

caile 'young girl' in Argyll and Perthshire, but it has derogatory connotations elsewhere.

caileag 'little girl, lassie' everywhere.

nighean 'daughter, maiden, girl'. In Wester Ross this can be applied to an unmarried woman of any age.

nigheanag/nionag/nighneag 'little daughter, little girl, young girl'

In some dialects these terms have developed into a two-stage diminutive system of some sort; where nighean - caileag - nionag become smaller and more endearing. In relation to this, there is an example of

the use of a diminutive to placate or remove some of the threat from the forces of the supernatural

nigheanag bheag a'bhrðin 'the sorrowful little washer'

"this is the naiad or waternymph who presides over those about to die and washes their shrouds on the edge of a lake" (Dwelly 1973:698)

This type of diminutive is very widespread.

One dialect for which quite a lot of material is available is that of South Uist, through Craig (1953).

From this study, the domains in which diminutives are used most frequently emerge very clearly:

- animals:

sgàireãg	'young seagull'	(4)
uiseãg	'lark'	(4)
boiteãg	'worm'	(4)
cearbãn	'basking shark'	(11)
aghãn	'little heifer'	(12)
partãn	'small crab'	(13)
iseãiñ	'chicken; young of any animal'	(35)
cuileãin	'pup'	(35)

- to and about people for endearment etc.

cabãg	'chatterbox'	(3)
cailleachãg	'little old woman'	(4)
beaṅãg	'wifie'	(4)
piuthrãg	'little sister'	(4)
bodãṅ	'little penis'	(12)
deamãṅ	'child's bottom'	(12)
leannãṅ	'lover' (poetic)	(12)
achãsãn	'rebuke'[2]	(13)
cnatãṅ	'headcold'	(13)
gràidheãiñ	'dear' (to male)	(36)

These two forms are very common in South Uist.

- geographical and environmental features (including plants)

dearcāg	'berry'	(4)
gleannān	'little glen'	(12)
glogān	'thistle'	
cluarān	'thistle'(poetic)	(12)
neòinteāin	'daisy'	(36)

- hypocoristics

Catrìānāg	'Cathie'	(4)
Dòmhgān	'little Donald'	(12)
Jagān	'little John'	(12)

- domestic objects, tools, etc.

breacāg	'scone'	(4)
biodāg	'dirk'	(4)
lòbān	'wicker basket for winnowing grain'	(11)
breacān	'plain'	(11)
brochān	'porridge'	(12)
cuɪmhṅeachān	'keepsake, souvenir'	(12)
cammān	'shinty stick'	(12)
sporān	'purse, sporran'	(12)

finally, there are a few examples which could be linked with placating the supernatural; e.g. sìtheāin 'elfmound' (36); and perhaps also marbhān 'dead person' (11) from marbh 'dead', although this could have the sense of 'belonging to death' rather than that of a simple diminutive.

It is difficult to assess just how productive diminutives are in modern Gaelic. As far as I have been able to find out, they are now virtually non-productive. The average native speaker cannot coin a new diminutive without creating a humorous effect. The

number of nouns that do have a diminutive form, however is vast even though it is a closed set. Dwelly (1973) lists most if not all of them, which would suggest a fully lexicalised status, but as the limited number is so large, a pseudo-productivity may still exist in the speaker's mind.

There are a number of nouns which cannot form diminutives, although these are fewer than those that can. They include the following:

latha	'day'
achadh	'field'
muirt	'sea'
cocaod	'war'
taigh	'house'

With all of these, beag would be used instead.

There is some evidence that the agent-suffix may resist it, as maraichadh 'sailor' for example does not form a diminutive. duine does not form a diminutive *duinean, but if it is shifted into the noun-class in -each, it does: duineachan.

These nouns which denote the origin of a person do not form diminutives.

e.g.	Leodhasach	'a person from Lewis'
	Albanach	'a Scot'
	Sasaanach	'an Englishman' (lit. 'a Saxon')

A few nouns which are not diminutives nevertheless end in a sequence resembling a diminutive suffix; these do not form diminutives.

e.g.	citeag (m)	'a left-handed person'	
	eilean	'an island'	eileanan 'islands';

In this example a theoretically possible diminutive would cause ambiguity between plural and diminutive forms. ? X

Irish

The situation in Southern Irish (or Gaelic) is different from that in Scottish Gaelic. The most widespread suffix is -ín, originally used only for masculine nouns (Fem. -óg is now no longer productive), but now used on nouns of either gender. Both -ín and -óg take primary stress and in this respect they are different from most other suffixes in Irish and in fact in Celtic as a whole.[3]

e.g. bothar 'road' botharín 'little road'[4]

In Connemara Irish and in a few words in Galway Irish (see below), lenition (a process of consonant mutation) takes place before the -ín suffix.

e.g. leabhar 'book' leabhairín 'booklet'
bosca 'box' boiscín 'little box'
but cuas 'nest, hollow' cuasnóg 'nest of honey-bees'
(O'Nolan 1934:239)

As was already mentioned above, in most of the modern dialects -óg has ceased to be productive; so much so that O'Siadhail (1980), based on the dialect of Cois Fhairrge, Co.Galway does not even mention it, while most other sources do. He does however include -ín as a fully productive suffix, that can be added to "all nouns"(162).

e.g. bád 'boat' báidín 'a little boat'
fuinneoig 'window' fuinneoigín 'a little window'
siopa 'shop' sipín 'a little shop'
teach 'house' teachaín 'a little house'
cró 'shed' cróín 'a little shed'
doras 'door' doirisín 'a little door'
(O'Siadhail 1980:162)

-ʃn can also be used with an endearing or a pejorative sense. It has largely ceased to be productive in the North, except in Donegal. On the whole the Ulster dialects (including Donegal) use -ag (from -óg) like Scottish Gaelic, for feminine diminutives.

e.g. Donegal: beachag

sileag

crumhag

It is already becoming clear that there are considerable dialect differences within the Irish language and although there is a standard spelling, there is not, as yet, a standard dialect or accent. As a result each scholar presents a different picture of diminutives in Irish, depending on which dialect is being described. In the South West, there are three suffixes which express some sort of diminutive sense, as is described by Sjoestedt-Jonval (1938:57) in his account of the dialect of Dunquin on Blasket Island, Co.Kerry: -ín preceded by a "palatal vowel", used for hypocoristics and for masculine nouns.

e.g. firín 'a little young man'

Máirín 'little Mary'

-án masculine nouns, usually with pejorative connotations.

e.g. marbhán 'passive, lifeless person'

suarachán 'worthless object or being' (suarach 'insignificant')

-óg feminine suffix.

e.g. luch 'a mouse' luchóg 'little mouse'

Sjoestedt-Jonval describes this as a "Suffixe peu vivant", but mentions its use for nicknames (57). Finally, O'Nolan (1934) - who somehow seems to try and describe all dialects - gives yet more diminutive suffixes. In addition to -ʃn and -óg he lists the following:

-ɲn: cnocɲn 'hillock'

-gɲn/-agɲn (variations of -án?)

Íosa - Íosagán 'little Jesus'

-naid: Bláthnaid 'Little Flower'

(O'Nolan 1934:234)

He also mentions the use of -án as a diminutive suffix on adjectives (232).

e.g. beagán 'little, few'

mórán 'much, many'

Welsh

In Welsh the synthetic diminutive seems to have become totally unproductive. Its place has been taken by an analytic diminutive by means of the adjective bach 'little, small'[5] placed after the noun, which is very productive.

A few diminutives, reflecting the old suffixes survive in a lexicalised form. The following are given by Spurrell (1870:127):

-an	mab	'a son'	baban	'a babe'
	bach	'little'	bychan	'little'
-en	miar	'a briar'	miaren	'a little briar'
	pel	'a ball'	pelen	'a little ball'
-ig	afon	'a river'	afonig	'a rivulet'
	morwyn	'a maid'	morwynig	'a little maid'
-yn	bachgen	'a boy'	bachgenyn	'a little boy'
	mul	'a mule'	mulyn	'a little mule'
plural:	-os: plant	'children'	plantos	'little children'
	ŵyn	'lambs'	wynos	'lambkins'

Breton

In Breton the -ig suffix, spelt -ig, -ic, -ik, -iq, is still productive on nouns of either gender and on adjectives. Its plural form is

-igòu added to the normal plural form. No change in gender takes place.

e.g. nouns:

ti	'house'	tiig	'little house'
bag	'boat'	bagig	'little boat'

(Hemon 1948:22)

pezh	'piece'	tri fezic	'three little pieces'
bloavezh	'year'	eur blavezic pe daou	'a short year or two'
banne	'drop'	ur banniq	'a little drop'
lev	'league'	ul lêvic vian	'a little short league'
gwech	'time'	eur wechik	'one little time'

(Hemon 1975:28)

plural forms:

tiez	'houses'	tiezigòu	'little housés'
bagòu	'boats'	bagouigòu	'little boats'

(Hemon 1948:22)

Ternes (1970:336) gives the following forms for the dialect of the island of Groix.[6]

e.g.	//ba:g//[7]	'boat'	ba:gič	'little boat'
	//kog//	'cock'	kogiʃənəŋ	lit. 'little summer cock'; name of a bird.
	//tam//	'piece'	tamič	'a little bit'

Hemon (1948:31) lists a few examples of diminutives derived from adjectives. In fact, he states that "Tout adjectif peut avoir un diminutif". The suffix used is -ik in all examples. In addition, a voicing of the final consonant of the base takes place if this is /p, t, k/ or /s/ and if by suffixation it becomes intervocalic.

e.g. bihan 'small, little' bihanik , bras 'big, large' brazik

Italian

In Italy, too, different dialects use different suffixes. A simplified version of this distribution is shown on the map (p.230). On the whole, the Northern dialects show a preference for -ett- (-etto, -etta), the central regions, especially Tuscany, for -in-(-ino, -ina) and the South for -ell- (-ello, -ella etc.). -in- is especially common in Tuscany and is often considered to be typical for Florence (Hasselrot 1957:230). In reality, it occurs over most of the Italian mainland although it varies in popularity from one dialect to another. Hasselrot (1957:232) finds that overall, Lucca is the richest in diminutives. In some regions the suffix takes the form -in or /-iŋ/ in the masculine. e.g.:

tavola	'table'	tavolino	(Rohlfs 1954:304)
casa	'house'	casina	(Rohlfs 1954:304)
vecchina	'nice old lady'		
bocca	'mouth'	bocchino	(Ettinger 1974:102)
poco	'little, few'	pochino	(Ettinger 1974:102)
mamma		mammina	(Ettinger 1974:103)
uomo	'man, person'	omino	(Ettinger 1974:103)
cavallo	'horse'	cavallino	(Ettinger 1974:106)
pescatore	'fisherman'	pescatorino	(Ettinger 1974:107)
Piedmont:	kravíŋ		(Rohlfs 1954:304)
Lombardy:	kavríŋ	for St. It. capretto 'kid goat'	

-ett- is the second most popular suffix. It dominates with -in- the Northern half of the country and is virtually non-existent South of Tuscany, with the exception of Rome, e.g.:

capra	'goat'	capretto	(Rohlfs 1954;III:346)
cavallo	'horse'	cavalletto	(Rohlfs 1954;III:346)

donna	'woman, wife'	donetta	(Rohlfs 1954;III:346)
piazza	'square'	piazzetta	(Ettinger 1974:94)
palazzo	'palace'	palazzetto	(Ettinger 1974:94)
voce	'voice'	vocetta	(Ettinger 1974:94)
pasticcio	'pie'	pasticcetto	(Ettinger 1974:95)
uomo	'man'	ometto	(Ettinger 1974:95)
animale		animaletto	(Ettinger 1974:96)

Only with some words are these two suffixes in complementary distribution. According to Ettinger (1974:90) nouns and adjectives in -n always take -ett- and those in -t- always take -in-. This is part of the general tendency in Romance languages discussed by Ettinger (1974) to avoid using the final consonant of the base form in the suffix (cf. 6.2.1.1).

letto	lettino	'bed'
but	*lettetto	
vino	vinetto	'wine'
but	*vinino	

In all other words a specialisation between the two suffixes has taken place, whereby -in- has more endearing connotations and -ett- is more purely diminutive without emotional connotations. Ettinger (1974:143) adds to these -ucci with negative connotations e.g.:

casa	casuccia	(122)
bocca	boccuccia	(122)
cavallo	cavalluccio	(123)

Rohlfs (1954:250ff) considers the meaning of -ucci- to be less straightforward however: "Die Bedeutung des Suffixes schwankt in der Schriftsprache zwischen diminutivem, pejorativem und kosendem Sinn. Meist umfasst ein mit -uccio gebildetes Wort mehrere dieser Nuancen."

Hasselrot (1957:228ff) also discussed the differences between -in- and -ett- and although he begins by giving the standard explanation that "-etto est diminutivo, -ino est diminutivo et vezzeggiative (i.e. 'endearing') a la fois". He subsequently qualifies this general statement in various ways. He finds for example that a "camioncino est un vehicule plus petit que camionetta" (hasselrot 1957:229) and many of the regional dialects have more subtle distinctions between these two suffixes. I refer to Hasselrot for a more detailed analysis. There are a number of other suffixes used in Italian as well as those discussed so far. For example -ell-, -ill-, -oll-, -ull- (and udd-): these suffixes seem to be related. On the whole these are Southern suffixes; -illu/-iddu are often used to form hypocoristics and occur in many surnames (Rohlfs 1954:294). The suffix -ollo does occur in Tuscany; -olla in Naples and Abruzzi and -ullu/-uddu in the extreme South (Rohlfs 1954:295). These too are frequently used to form hypocoristics e.g.:

Giacomo	Jacolillo	(Rohlfs 294-295)
Paolo	Paliddu	(Rohlfs 294-295)
Chiara	Chiarodde	(Rohlfs 294-295)
Bonifacio	Faziudde	(Rohlfs 294-295)

-ell- from Latin -ullus is treated by Ettinger (1974) and Rohlfs (1954:292ff). Ettinger finds that -ell- occurs nearly always in the 3rd syllable. Only with a few stems in-r does it occur in the 2nd syllable e.g.:

carro	'cart, car'	carrello	(Ettinger 1974:115)
muro	'wall'	murello	(Ettinger 1974:115)
paese	'country'	paesello	(Ettinger 1974:115)
bambino	'child'	bambinello	(Ettinger 1974:115)

With monosyllabic nouns, -er-/-ar- are usually added before -ell-

e.g. banca 'bank' bancarella (Ettinger 1974:117)
bancherella
gente 'people' genterella
santo 'saint' santerello 'sanctimonious young person' (Purves 1961:353)

-ol-, -uol-, -ðl: the latter form is largely confined to the North and takes -ú as its plural e.g. Bologna

fiðl 'Son + Dim' fiú 'son + Dim Plu' (Rohlfs 1954:297)

The other forms are more widespread. Ettinger (1974:117-118) gives various examples:

figlio/a 'son/daughter' figluolo/a
famiglia 'family' famigluola
formica 'ant' formicola
poesia 'poetry' poesiola
bestia 'beast' bestiola

This suffix is used instead of -in- on certain words (Ettinger 1974:133)

bestia bestiola
but *bestina
miseria miseriola
but *miserina

-att-, -ott-, -itt-: the last suffix is largely confined to the North East, especially in Friuli and Istria (Rohlfs 1954:350) and to Sicily (see below). The other two are used primarily to refer to the young of animals e.g.:

lupatto 'wolf cub' (Rohlfs 1954:348, 349)
orsatto 'bear cub' (Rohlfs 1954:348, 349)
lupotto (Rohlfs 1954:348, 349)

orsotto (Rohlfs 1954:348, 349)

aquilotto 'young eagle' (Rohlfs 1954:348, 349)

-one is an augmentative suffix in most Italian dialects, however, according to Rohlfs (1954:322) it may have an augmentative as well as a diminutive sense in the extreme South, often found in the form -arrone/-arrunè.

As well as the "linking particle"[1] -ar-/-er-, Italian uses -(i)c-. Ettinger (1974:147-8; 1972) finds the origin of -(i)c-in Latin. Ettinger (1974) also tried to find conditioning factors for the distribution of the various suffixes in Italian. Although he is unable to find any clear-cut rules, other than those already mentioned, some general tendencies seem to emerge, for which I refer to Ettinger (1974:140ff). He discusses in some detail the phenomenon of suffix accumulation which is relatively productive in Italian. He follows M.Sigg (1954) in that he distinguishes between "Modifikantenverknüpfung", involving as it were a complex suffix occurring as a single unit, and "Modifikantenakkumulation" involving different productive suffixes. Under the former Ettinger lists a number of regularly occurring complex suffixes. He also includes here those forms involving the linking particle -ar-/-er- (Ettinger 1974:157). Other than these, he mentions the following: -acc-ol-; -ec-ol-, -uc-ol-, -up-ol-, -ogn-ol-, -acchi-on-, -acchi-ott-, -acchi-ol-, -azz-on-; where -ott- and -on- are augmentative suffixes e.g.:

donnàccola

maestro - maestrucolo

verde - verdognolo 'greenish'

santo - santacchione

ladra - ladracchiola 'thief (f)' etc.

For the latter type of accumulation proper, he finds clear cut restrictions to the order in which productive suffixes can accumulate. These are set out below (Ettinger: 1974:162):

1	2	3	4
-ell-	-ucci-	-acci-	(-on-)
-ett-	-on-	-in-	

Usually only two of these occur together in any given example, although three are possible (Ettinger 1974:163):

storielluccia

ladroncellaccia

sposellina

calduccino	'hottish'	
panettone	'bread + Dim + Aug'	a kind of cake
corpaccione	'body'	etc.

Some of these forms have been lexicalised e.g. ragazzaccio 'uncouth, rude youth' (Ettinger: 1974:181). One phenomenon which is especially common in Tuscany is the ability of the diminutive suffixes to become an independent word, usually employed to qualify or describe something (Hasselrot 1957:235).

questo vino e proprio uccio	'this wine is really bad'
un poderino proprio ino	'a really little farmlet'

Adjectives and adverbs themselves, as well as verbs, are also frequently diminutivised (Ettinger 1974):

dolce	'sweet'	dolcetto	(Ettinger 94)
solo	'alone, lonely'	soletto	(Ettinger 98)
verde	'green'	verdino	(Ettinger 102)
bello	'beautiful'	bellino	(Ettinger 103)

tanto	'so much'	tantinello	(Ettinger 116)
scrichiare		scricchiolare	(Ettinger 118) 'to creak'
rosso	'red'	rossiccio	(Ettinger 121)
malo	'bad'	maluccio	(Ettinger 122)
infettare	'to infect'	infettucciati	(Ettinger 123)
caldo	'hot, warm'	calduccino	(Ettinger 161)

Diminutive adverbs usually have an intensifying sense (Hasselrot 1957:232-233). The relationship between diminutive and gender in Italian is also worth considering. Hasselrot (1957:235) claims that in the North of Italy, feminine hypocoristics are often formed with a masculine suffix

e.g. Milan: Margaritõ

Mariètt

Rosĩ

Rohlfs (1949:86) recognises this as an even more widespread phenomenon. For example, where a diminutive serves to denote a young animal:

aquila	'eagle'	aquilino, aquilotto
lepre	'hare'	lepratto
rana	'frog'	ranocchio

Many words can form diminutives of either gender, but the opposite gender to the base form is often used e.g.:

casa		casino	chiesa	'church'	chiesino
strada	'road'	stradello	canzone	'song'	canzoncino

Rohlfs blames this on variation in gender-assignment of certain Latin words of the 4th declension in different parts of Italy. In a few cases a feminine diminutive is formed from a masculine noun:

velo 'veil' veletta 'lady's veil' (Purves 1961:71)

Sicilian and Sard

The "mainland" suffixes are in Sicilian largely confined to lexicalised diminutives. The productive suffixes in Sicily are quite different on the whole:

-eddu: especially on words of more than two syllables.

-iddu: used only for nouns; referring primarily to size.

-iteddu/-iceddu: (the latter in Messina).

-uddu/-uzzu: primarily an endearing diminutive.

-ittu: is only used in the East of the island.

Rohlfs (1954:345) also mentions the suffix -otu used in the North-East of Sicily.

examples:	acchiddu		'small eye'
	pizziddu		'a little bit/piece'
	aciduzzu		'little bird'
	panzitta		'little belly' (Hasselrot 1957:225)
	piccittu		'small + Dim' (Rohlfs 1954:350)
	Petraliotu	< Petralia	(Rohlfs 1954:345)
	chiazzotu		'little square' (Rohlfs 1954:345)

In Sardinia, the analytic diminutive with piticcu is far more common than the synthetic diminutive so popular in Italy. The suffixes -eḍḍu and -iceḍḍu/-igheḍḍu/-ieḍḍu etc., however, are frequently used to form hypocoristics. They may also be used in child language, but are frowned upon in adult language, especially by men (Hasselrot 1957:239-241). Wagner (1952:462) explains that they rarely, in fact, have any endearing connotations. The suffix -ettu was imported from the Italian mainland. It may also have been influenced by -et(e), used by the Catalan-speaking community in Alghero on the west coast of the island.

Rhaetoromance

This term is used to refer to a group of closely related Romance dialects. My discussion of these will be very brief, as in many ways they are typical for the Romance dialects in general. They do, however, present some points of special interest. In Friulan, -inu is very common as a diminutive suffix, as are a number of forms of the -TT- type.[1] This takes the form -ut(e), the most common diminutive suffix, -at(e), a less common diminutive suffix with strong pejorative connotations and finally the -et(e) diminutive suffix. According to Pirona's Friulan vocabulary, 10% of the 30,000 words it contains have one of these -TT- suffixes (Hasselrot 1957:84). This work also lists about a hundred words in -it. Hasselrot (1957: 84-5) recognises close links with Italian. Thus -at corresponds to Italian -accio, which is to some extent borne out by the semantics, as he explains: "... -at confère au mot-thème une valeur pejorative-augmentative qui jure avec la force diminutivisante propre au suffixe -attu." Similarly, -ut corresponds to -uccio and -it to -iccio.

e.g.	Friulan	Italian	
	affarut	affaruccio	'petty affair'
	rossit	rosiccio	'reddish'[2]
	alborats	alberacci (pl)[3]	'little trees'

Some of the -TT- frequentative forms also have a diminutive sense in Friulan. The most common suffixes used are -azzâ/-atâ, -uzzâ/-utâ, -izzâ/-itâ,

e.g.	tazzutâ	'to cut into small pieces, mince'
		(from tazzâ 'cut into pieces')
	zujuzzâ	'make a little fun of'

Similar examples occur, less frequently in Ladin and the Swiss Rhaetic dialects. In Eastern Ladin, spoken in the Dolomites, -ittu is the

most common diminutive suffix, with -inu a close second. · Less common are -īn, -eto, -uco, -el and the suffix -uto, used with personal names only. In Western Ladin, -in and -et are very frequently used. They can be added to any noun and to many adjectives and they are fully productive. Some specialisation in meaning has taken place, for, as Arquint (1964:101) explains, -in has stronger emotional and affective connotations than -et.[4]

e.g.	mat	'boy'	mattet	'small boy'
			mattin	'little boy'
	matta	'girl'	mattetta	'small girl'
			mattina	'little girl'
	pitschen	'small, little'	pitschnet	
			pitschnin	

In the Engadine, -in is by far the most common suffix and seems to have developed a slightly different set of connotations in relation to the less frequent -et.

e.g.	homin	'homme tres petit'
	homet	'homme assez petit'; 'petit homme digne de compassion'
	vachin(a)	'tres petite vache'
	vachetta	'vache de grandeur moyenne mais de peu de valeur'

(examples from Hasselrot 1957:242)

So here -in(a) is neutral and -et(ta) has developed certain negative connotations. Most of the hypocoristic forms use the suffix -in(a).

In literary prose and scientific language the suffix -et is used without affective sense (Hasselrot, 1957:243). This corresponds with the situation for W. Ladin as outlined by Arquint. Finally, Hasselrot mentions a suffix -etg(a) used in Sursilvan:

e.g. alpetga 'little alp' spurtelletg 'little basket'

The area around Domat/Ems, near Chur has adopted -li from Swiss German, e.g.:

tgoŋli 'Little dog' (Hasselrot 1957:43)

French

In a way, French is similar to English. Like English, synthetic diminutives are largely confined to hypocoristics and kinship terms. In most other areas and even in those mentioned, the diminutive, which is commonly used in French, is expressed by means of the adjective petit, which can therefore be considered the equivalent of English little (rather than small). Before analysing this situation in more depth, let us first consider the synthetic diminutive in French. This is, after all, the main topic of the present thesis. Synthetic diminutives in French are formed almost exclusively by means of the suffixes -et/-ette and -ot/otte. Hasselrot (1957:54-56, and map) shows that -ot is primarily an Eastern suffix and -et dominates the rest of the French-speaking areas. In modern standard French, both play a role, although -et/-ette is far more common than -ot/-otte. Hasselrot (1972:22ff) gives the following productive examples among others:

a. With -et/-ette, fillette is of course the most common example; also, actricette, affichette, amourette, avionnette, femmelet[1] and femmette, fermette, garçonnet, idolet(te), littératurette, mensonginet, provincette, républiquette, etc.

b. With -ot: chiennot, frérot, îlot, paysannot, rabbinot, soleillot, etc.

Some of these examples refer to small size; républiquette, for example, was used to refer to San Marino; provincette is an administrative unit in the Republic of Kongo; îlot is a petit île etc. Others are playing down something serious: amourette, mensonginet. Yet other examples are pejorative: idolet(te), actricette, littératurette etc.; fermette is often used by estate agents. Hasselrot's list also includes a number of loans from English, using the English

-let and -ette suffixes once borrowed from French e.g.:

craterlet, nymphette, tanquette, starlet(te).

In some cases, English loans have been adapted, either by deriving a diminutive from an English word - thus creating a word which does not exist in English: snobinette (< snob), starlinette - or by giving an English word a more acceptable French form: kitchenette > cuisinette.

To a lesser extent, adjectives and adverbs can also form diminutives. The following examples are among those given by Hasselrot (1972:64-66):

un peu bêtote, blondinet, drôlet, ivrelette, vulgairette

Another interesting parallel with English is the widespread use of the -et(te) suffix for product names. Hasselrot (1957:202ff; 1972: 79-81) mentions some of these. Among them:

Mobylette	= a moped manufacturer
Butanette	= a gas cooker
Capricet des Dieux	= a cheese by the manfuacturers of 'Caprice des Dieux'
Fruitinettes	= sweets
Vampyrette	= a vacuum-cleaner by A.E.G.
Cote d'or Mignonette	= a small block of chocolate by Cote d'or
un coffret	= of Solido model cars
	etc.

Another specialised use of -et/-ette is for deriving coach-builder's terms. These terms have become international over the past 200 years or so. In most of these examples, there is still a certain diminutive sense.

berlinette (< berline) 'a small closed 2-seater sports car (also Italian: berlinetta)'

camionnette (< camion) and fourgonnette are types of van.

voiturette (< voiture): often used for what was called a "cycle-car" on this side of the Channel in the period roughly between 1910-1930 - although also used for any small car.

Other similar terms I have encountered are: landaulette (< landau), wagonnette (< wagon), cabriolet, coupelet (< coupé), salonette (< 'saloon'?), sedancalette (< sedanca), sedanette (< sedan)

It may have been noticed that the vast majority of the examples given above of the -et/-ette suffix use its feminine form. This is not only the case when the base form is feminine but increasingly, masculine words have formed feminine diminutives. Hasselrot (1957:198; 1972:58) mentions savon - savonnette as one of the earliest examples (16th century); fourgon - fourgonnette is another more recent one. This trend is usually explained by the fact that the feminine /-ɛt/ is more clearly marked than masculine /-ɛ/ in modern French.[2] Partly as a result of this, in the more productive areas of hypocoristics and, to a lesser extent, kinship terms, there has been an increasing tendency to form a m/f opposition by means of -ot/-ette e.g.:

Charlot	Claudette
Georgeot	Georgette
Jeannot	Jeannette
Louisot	Mariette

and the more recent formations:

Cilette (< Cecile), Francinette (< Françoise), Ariette (< Ariane), Binette (< Sabine) etc.

(Hasselrot 1972:68; 1957:196)

Hasselrot (1957:197; 1972:69-70) also gives some examples of hypocoristic forms derived from surnames, often with homorous-pejorative connotations: Lord Byronet, Kennedyllet, Robespierrot, Gauguinette (for a young woman painter who went to Tahiti in 1965).

-ette has one other function and this is as a feminine marker. This, too, is similar to English (cf. relevant section). In this function, it can be used to turn a man's name into a woman's name. This is not possible in English - where its use is limited to the type usher-usherette - although we have seen a similar phenomenon in West Frisian. Hasselrot (1957:197; 1972:71) gives the examples:

Claude	Claudette
Antoine	Antoinette
Henri	Henriette
Yves	Yvette etc.

Many other forms of this type are in fact loans from English: suffragette, majorette etc. (cf. Hasselrot 1972:72) - although this type of formation is productive in French e.g.: (Hasselrot 1972:73ff): centaurette, gangsterette, teenette '('a female teenager').

In addition to -ot(te) and -et(te), a few other suffixes can be used with a diminutive sense in French. These are very rare on the whole. Hasselrot (1972:82) mentions: -on, -in(e), -eau, -elle, -ille, -iche, -oche, -uche. Some of these are used primarily as <immature> suffixes e.g.: baleinon, bufflon, girafon, ourson, aiglon

buffletin, baleineau, girafeau, lionceau etc.

As "real" diminutives formed by means of these suffixes, Hasselrot gives, among others: cabanon, bottine, diablotin, caveau, ruelle. Many of the "linking particles" referred to earlier find their origin in one of these suffixes. Especially with -et, there seems to be some resistance to the addition of the suffix alone; -el-, -in-

or -on-, in some form, is inserted as well. This may again be related to the fact that /-ɛ/ was not felt to be marked enough:[3] angelet, enfantelet, garaginet etc. Added in conjunction with -ette, a kind of double or intensified diminutive can be formed e.g.: femme > femmette > femmelette.

Hasselrot (1972:13) proposes a rule of French under which -et(te) cannot be attached directly to a base which ends in a dental. He claims that this may be an even more important cause for the occurrence of these linking particles than making the masculine suffix more marked.

As well as these native suffixes, French has the ability to form "learned" diminutives by means of Greek and Latin suffixes e.g.: ministricule, vedettuscule - and various scientific formations (Hasselrot 1972:84-86).

Verbs

It is interesting to note that the suffixes involving -tt- are more productive on verbs than nouns in modern French. They have an iterative, frequentative (i.e.: referring to continuous or repeated action) or diminutive-pejorative sense. Hasselrot (1957:92-101, 212 and 1972:66-7) describes them, albeit in less detail than the nominal formations e.g.:

brûler	-	brûloter
danser	-	dansoter
parler	-	parloter

-ette can be used as a nominalising suffix when added to verbs:

une fumette de hasch (< fumer) (Hasselrot 1972:78-79)

Some other suffixes also form iterative or diminutive verbs e.g.:

flâner - flânocher; touser - toussailler (Dauzat 1955:16).

Petit

In the first paragraph, I mentioned that the most common diminutive in French is by means of an analytic construction. This was not always the case. Until the 17th century, the synthetic diminutive was nearly as productive as in other Romance languages. As a result of resistance to these forms and their subsequent decline (cf. Chapter 1), a vacuum was created into which petit was drawn, adopting in the process much of the affective meaning of the original diminutives. This scenario is supported by Hasselrot (1957:206; 1972:89) and Togeby (1958:198), although others claim that the decline of the suffixes was due to the rise of the adjective, among them, Dubois and Dubois (1971) in their Introduction à la Lexicographie; le dictionnaire - from which Hasselrot quotes: "La sensible régression des diminutifs trouve son origine dans la progression constante de l'adjectif petit comme élément hypocoristique ou diminutif". On the whole, I find the former development more convincing. There is no doubt, however, that the present status of petit was achieved after a gradual process of increasing popularity, reaching its height in the first half of the 20th century. This development is traced by Hérisson (1956:114-123) who concludes that today, petit "est toujours considerée comme gentille et joue le rôle de terme d'estime, d'affection et d'amitié; ...." As such, it has entered most of the traditional diminutive domains:

- hypocoristics and kinship terms[4]

ma petite femme — Petit-Jean (Hasselrot 1972:87)

mon petit mari — mon petit Pierrot[5]

- terms of endearment in child language:

mon petit chéri

petit ange

- or the language of lovers

ma petite chouchoute (Hérisson 1956:37)

- friendship and camaraderie

mon petit ami

ma petite madame

"..., il faut souligner l'importance, en français, des expressions «mon petit» , «ma petite» , appliquées aux adultes" (Hérisson 1956:38)

e.g. mon cher petit

mon pauvre petit, le petit Dupont or

"Il a raison, les petits. Allez en pays arverne;..."

'Chief Abraracourcix to his warriors Astérix and Obélix in Goscinny & Uderzo (1968:12))

Pejorative expressions can be played down, as in petit diable, and familiar objects dear to the speaker can be described as ma petite auto etc. whilst the French love eating their own petits pois, after which they may be presented with a petite facture (Hasselrot 1972:88). Hérisson's claim that petit is often used in a pejorative sense is less well illustrated e.g.: petites gens, petite nature, petits esprits; we could perhaps add petit bourgeois. If this is indeed one of the uses of petit, it is certainly far less important than its endearing sense, although I have found a few good examples in Hergé (1973) "Tintin au Congo (1930)" in Archives Hergé, Tome 1:216 e.g.

"Silence!... on va vous la reparer, votre sale petite machine!"

"Oui, votre sale petit truc."

Its strict diminutive sense, i.e.: referring to smallness, has lost much of its importance, although this sense is certainly still there and will remain no doubt, as French does not have an equivalent to English small (next to little, which is more similar in meaning to petit).

Finally, we should mention some more marginal types of diminutive formation. Hasselrot (1972:91ff) mentions the "prefixes" bébé-/baby- and mini-, also used in other European languages and probably of English origin. More interesting, perhaps, is the use of reduplication. I have already mentioned chouchoute. In addition, Hérisson (1956:36) gives fifille, pépère, mémère. Hasselrot (1972:101) gives a few examples in an appendix: bébête, venventre, Jean-Jean and even guéguerre and che-chèques.

Occitan

There is no standard dialect of Occitan, although two "semi"-standards have started to develop. One around Southern Provençal and the other one in Languedoc. However there remains an enormous variation as to the forms and the use of the many diminutive suffixes throughout the Occitan-speaking area. The most widespread and most common suffixes are -et/-eta and -on (Provençal: -(ih)oun/-(ih)ouno).[1]

e.g.	flor	'flower'	floreta	'little flower'
	teule	'(roofing) tile'	teulon	'flat pebble'
	article	'article'	articlet	'small article'
	una femna	'a woman'	una femneta	'little woman'
			un femnon[2]	'little woman'

(Teulat 1976:81-82)

mas	'farm'	maset	'little farm'
aucèu	'bird'	auceloun	'little bird'
cadeno	'chain'	cadeneto	'little chain'
chato	'young girl'	chatouno	'little girl'
pastre	'herdsman'	pastrihoun	'little herdsman'
fenèstro	'window'	fenestreto	'little window'
		fenestroun	'little window'

(Bayle 1975:182-183)

Accumulation of suffixes is possible and fairly common.

e.g. chato 'boy' — chatouno — chatouneto

or: aucèu — aucelet — aucelin — auceloun — auceletoun — aucelinet — aucelounet

Some of the rarer suffixes are the following:

-òt:	paure	'poor' (Adj N)	lo pauròt	'the little poor one' (Novèl 1979:37, 47,50)
	can	'dog'	canhòt	'little dog' (Teulat:82)
-olo:	anteno	'antenna'	antenolo	'little antenna' (Bayle:182)
-oc:	pal		paloc	(Barcelonnette dialect, Hasselrot 1957:252)
-òbre:	coulhoun		coulhòbre	(" Hasselrot 1957:252)
-ifo/-icho:	bougnifo	'head-dress, cap'		(Aveyron dialect) (Hasselrot 1957:252)
	bougnicho	'head-dress, cap'		

There is a rather obscure -i suffix, often used for proper names and for a few nouns.

e.g. Pascal - Pascalèti

Gustave - Gustàvi

ulhòtis 'little eyes' (Barcelonnette)

-ellu survives in the Gévaudan, where an affix -èsta also exists.

e.g. a l'obresta! 'a l'ouvrage donc!'

Guil - Guillestre

(Hasselrot 1957:252)

In Gascon and Béarnais, -inu is frequently used, although the other suffixes occur too.

e.g. mountine 'little mountain'

piét 'small or young pine-trees'

pinét 'small or young pine-trees'

Adjectives also form diminutives.[3]

e.g. galant galantoun

poulit 'pretty' poulidet(o)

bèu 'beautiful' belot(o)

(Bayle 1975:183)

doçamenton 'softly' (Novèl 1979:38)

Although -on/-oun[4] is used all over the Occitan area, including Nice, there are certain dialect differences. On the whole, -oun is more popular in the North than in the South of the Provençal area. In the form -ou it is reported from the regions of Lastic (Puy-de-Dôme) and Saugues (Hte.Loire); as Hasselrot explains (249). In the Drôme valley, a specialisation of the suffixes has taken place, whereby "-ou/-ouno... comporte avec elle, outre l'idée de la diminution, l'idée de gentillesse et quelquefois de compassion, tandis que -et/-eto accentue davantage quelque chose de petit, d'agréable et de charmant." (Moutier 1882:51).

e.g. lououssou 'petit lac'

louousset 'tout petit lac'

Usually lexicographers do not distinguish between the two suffixes when discussing meaning. This makes it difficult to work out the true differences. Hasselrot opts for -one as the more affective suffix, however he admits that this is not 100% reliable, as his examples show. (250/1):

uiet	'petit œil'	uioun	'petit œil mignon'
destraleto	'hachette'	destraloun	'hache toute petite, petit hachereau'

but:

naset	'petit nez, joli nez'	nasoun	'petit nez'
troupelet	'petite, joli troupeau'	troupeloun	'petit troupeau'

As in many other languages discussed so far, some diminutives have taken on a specialised meaning, as the following set shows:

sanguet	'sang d'un agneau'
sangueto	'galette faite avec du sang de poulet'
sanguéte	'personne sans vigueur'

also:

litroun	'demi-litre' (Marseilles)
ponsèto	'personne qui a une grande panse'

Occitan has one augmentative suffix[5] -às/-assa (Provençal -as/-asso), which can be used with positive connotations, even though it would normally be used in a pejorative sense.

e.g. una femna - un femnàs[6]

una femnassa

un rat 'a rat' un ratàs 'a big nasty rat'

(Teulat 1976:82)

aubre	'tree'	aubras	'big tree'
auro	'breeze'	aurasso	'strong breeze'
vènt	'wind'	ventaras	'destructive wind, gale'
chato	'young girl'	chatarasso	'a girl who neglects her appearance'

(Bayle 1975:183-4)

Hasselrot (1957:248) gives the following example from La Cabladuro d'or:

o princesso belasso 'belle princesse majestueuse'

A mixed form of diminutive plus augmentative is also possible to create an extra nuance.

e.g. un ratonàs 'un méchant petit rat; un gentil gros rat' (teulat, 82)

Catalan

In Catalan several suffixes are used: -í, -olí, -ol, -ó, -ot, -ell, but by far the most common are -et/-eta. The analytic diminutive by means of the adjective petit is also quite common and is sometimes used instead of a synthetic diminutive for stylistic reasons or because it is sometimes felt to be more appropriate with abstract nouns. As a result, some overlap between the two types of diminutive has developed, as Hasselrot (1957:256) points out:

> "... il est non moins vrai que les dits suffixes justifient souvent pleinement leur nom de diminutifs et que petit (antéposé) peut devoir sa présence à des raisons qui ont peu de rapport avec la diminution notionelle."

However, our main concern is with the synthetic diminutive, which is the most common and which "As well as denoting smallness of size, ... often conveys also a note of intimacy or of a favourable disposition on the part of the speaker." (Yates 1975:247)

e.g. fill 'son' fillet 'little son' (25)

llogar 'place' llogaret 'little place' (1)

gos 'dog' un gosset 'a little dog' (17)

porquet meu 'my little pig' (9)

petó 'kiss' petonet 'little kiss' (21)

festa 'holiday' festeta 'short holiday' (48)

(examples from Mora 1979, page refs. in brackets)

The father of one of my informants is affectionately known as bigotet (bigot 'moustache'). Mora (1979) also contains quite a few examples of the depreciatory or "playing down" use of diminutives.

e.g. uns Celtets 'some little Celts' (14)

un ataquet ben portat 'a well carried-out little attack'(16)

no s'enraoni massa d'aquest assumptet 'let us not speak anymore about that little affair' (45)

Hasselrot (1957:255) quotes a "satzdeminutif" with a similar effect of playing down the favour asked pleadingly by a blind beggar:

Senyoret, un centimet al platel del pobret ceguet

mister-dim, a centime-dim on the plate-dim of the poor-dim (blind man)-dim.

If one has to wait, the time can be diminutivised to make it seem shorter.

e.g. esperi's un momentet, si us plau 'wait just a moment+dim, please'

(Yates 1975:247)

When speaking to and about children diminutives are used.

e.g. Vés a buscar una cadireta per a la nena 'go and fetch a little chair for the little girl'

És una criatura molt entremaliadeta 'he/she is a very mischievous+dim child'

(Yates:247)

Yates (1975:247) also gives the following example of an order for an omelet:

una truiteta crueta per dins i ben rosseta per fora

'an omelet-dim, raw-dim on the inside and well brown-dim on the outside'

'a little omelet, nice and runny inside and lightly browned on the outside'

Some diminutives have taken on a specialised meaning.

e.g. poble 'town' poblet 'village'

Some of the rarer suffixes have also developed a specialised meaning.

e.g. taula 'table'

tauleta 'little table'

but: taulell 'a small table for putting against a wall'[1]

Adjectives and adverbs also form diminutives.

e.g. fa fresqueta aquí fora 'it's chilly-dim out here' (Yates 1975:247)

La meva dona no vol que me'n vagi de viatge solet...és més gelosa!

'My wife does not want me to travel alone+dim... she is very jealous!'

(Mora 1979:10)

Catalan forms many hypocoristics by means of the diminutive suffixes.

e.g. Pau - Pauet

Lluis - Uiso (Hasselrot 1957:257)

The second example is from Valencian, which uses an-o suffix with deletion of the initial consonant.

In Valencian, the suffix -iu/-iua has become as common as -et/-eta and it is practically synonymous with it (Hasselrot 1957:257).

Accumulation of suffixes is possible and in fact not uncommon in Catalan as the following example from Hasselrot (256) shows:

branca

branquí

branquinyó

branquinyoneta

branquinyonetó

Spanish

Diminutives are frequently used in Spanish, although it can not compete with Portuguese or Italian in this respect. This is true, at least, for standard Castilian Spanish. Here, one suffix -it- (-ito/-ita)[1] is far more productive than any other. A second suffix -ill- (-illo/illa) enjoys a certain productivity, but is on the whole largely limited to lexicalised examples. Other suffixes either have a distinctly regional feel about them (these will be treated separately) or they have become lexicalised. Where -it- and -ill- are both in use, -ill- has more negative connotations, though both can be used in an endearing sense[2] e.g.:

unos pepinitos estupendos 'some excellent (attractive) little cucumbers'

unos pepinillos malísimos 'some really atrocious (miserable) little cucumbers'

(Gooch 1967:6-7)

Because Spanish normally has primary stress on the penultimate syllable, this stress shifts to the diminutive suffix. In many cases a "linking particle"[3] /-(ə)θ-/ is inserted between the base and the suffix.[4] Following the general rules laid down by the Real Academia, Ettinger (1972:105-6) gives the following conditions for its insertion:

1. After bisyllabic words in <-e>

e.g.:	llave	'key'	llavecilla
	grande	'great, big'	grandecillo

2. After bisyllabic words in /-n/ and those in /-r/ with primary stress on the final syllable.

e.g.:	imagen	'image'	imagencica
	ladrón	'thief'	ladroncillo
	leon	'lion'	leoncito
	mujer	'woman, wife'	mujercita

3. After bisyllabic words with a stressed <ei>, <ie> or <ue> diphthong.

e.g.:	reino	'kingdom'	reinecito
	cuerpo	'body'	corpezuelo

4. After all monosyllabic nouns ending in a consonant.

e.g.:	ley	'law'	leyezuela
	flor	'flower'	florecita

5. After nearly all nouns and adjectives in <-io> , <-ia> and <-ua>

e.g.:	lengua	'language, tongue'	lengüecita
	genio	'genius'	geniecito
	frio	'cold'	friecillo

Some words form both diminutives with and without a linking particle. The Real Academia (1959:24) recognise a kind of double version of the linking particle -cec-/-cez- used with monosyllabic words that end in a vowel,

e.g. pie 'foot' piececito, piecezuelo

However Rojas (1974:13) states that it only occurs in this example.

Exceptions to all these rules can be found and a considerable discrepancy exists between their application in standard Castilian and in American Spanish. Even when no linking particle is used, a final unstressed vowel or diphthong is often dropped

e.g.	iglesia	'church'	iglesita	
	brazo	'arm'	bracito	

A few other suffixes occur in standard Spanish: of these -ej- and -uel- stand out. Both are diminutive suffixes, but in addition they usually have pejorative connotations e.g.:

artículo	'article'	articulejo	'wretched or modest little article'
mediano	'average'	medianejo	'fairish only, middling'
autor	'author'	autorzuelo	'wretched author, third-rate author'
aldea	'small village'	aldehuela	'wretched or miserable little village, apology for a village'

(Gooch 1967:123-137)

These pejorative diminutive suffixes form a transitional type between the normal diminutive suffixes and the proper pejorative suffixes which often have either a diminutive or an augmentative sense as well (cf. Gooch 1967:12-13, 241-278). The suffix -et-, which is also quite common, has humorous connotations, often with a certain irony or scorn e.g.:

alegre	'happy, merry'	alegrete	'a bit merry or high' (often from a drink)

(Gooch:147)

libro	'book'	librete	'a little book, not to be taken too seriously'

(Van Dam 1966:255)

Some diminutives have become lexicalised or can only be formed with one of these less productive suffixes. Double suffixes are also formed in Spanish, albeit not to the same extent as in Italian. These formations express an intensified diminutive. Not more than two suffixes can be combined and only in the following ways (adapted from Ettinger 1974:270):

1st position	2nd position
-et-	-ín -ill- -uch-(pejorative) -it-
-uch-(pejorative)	-ín

e.g. casa 'house' casetita

café 'coffee' cafetín, cafetucho

carro 'cart, wagon' carretillo

pálido 'pale' (adj) paliduchín

The same diminutive suffixes are used to form hypocoristics (cf. Van Dam 1966:257/8). The suffix is attached either to the full name, to a shortened form or to a special hypocoristic form e.g.:

Francisco - Paco, paquito, Quico

Antonio - Antoñito, Antoñín, Toño, Toñín

Dolores - Lola, Lolita

Mercedes - Merceditas

Diminutives are formed not only from nouns and adjectives - examples of which have already been given - they can also be formed from some participles and adverbs e.g.:

Ven prontito 'come soon + Dim' (Polo 1975:10)

está dormidito 'is asleep + Dim' (Polo:12)

These and similar forms are especially widespread in American Spanish as we shall see below.

Regional Dialects

The other diminutive suffixes - which may also occur in the standard dialect, especially that of the non-Castilian speakers - are primarily connected with certain regions. Thus /-in-/, /-iɳ-/ are connected with western dialects: -ino/u with Estremadura; -ín/-ina with Asturias; and Leon; and -iñ- with Galicia (see map). -uc- is mostly limited to the Montaña, the region around Santander; -ill- is the most productive suffix in most of Andalusia and -ic- occurs in a wide band from Aragon to Granada and also in Judeo-Spanish. In addition there is an area around Almería and Murcia where a double suffix -iqui- is used. These are the most productive suffixes in the areas mentioned; however in most cases, other suffixes also exist in these dialects.

Examples of these regional suffixes:

santo	'saint'	santico	(Gooch 1967:28)
tierra	'land'	la tierruca	'the homeland of Santander'
La Pilarica	La Virgen del Pilar, the Patron Saint of Saragossa (Gooch:26)		
calor	'heat'	calorín	'fierce heat' (Gooch:27)
morriña	'a combination of nostalgia and home-sickness' (for Galicia)		

A very detailed study of derivational morphology in a single dialect was undertaken by Malkiel (1970), whose subject was the dialect of Cabranes in East-central Asturias. In this Cabraniego dialect, the most common diminutive suffixes are -ín and -iellu e.g.:

niñ-ín	'baby'	piquin-in	'little one'

Malkiel also gives the example gurrumbín 'hunchback' (< gurrumbu) which he explains as originating from the "dwarfish" appearance of the hunchback. It would seem to me that an expression of pity or a playing down of a deforming affliction is a more likely explanation for this diminutive. -iellu is under increasing pressure from standard Spanish -illo, because as Malkiel (p.76) explains: "the identification of i with diminutiveness has become so intense and compelling in Cabraniego as to have opened the door for the infiltration of Castillian -illo, alongside autochthonous -iellu (soon in preference to it?)".[5] Malkiel gives few examples with -iellu. Other diminutive suffixes in this dialect are:

-icu, which "suggests melioratively 'smallness', blended with 'exquisiteness'; pejoratively 'effeteness, emptiness, futility'" (32) e.g.: marica 'sissy, milksop'

-uco, "smallness devoid of 'exquisiteness'" (32)

e.g.: fabucu 'small-sized broad bean'

-ina, "refers to a wide variety of small and visibly attractive objects" (41)

e.g. candela 'candle' candelina

dulcerina 'small, very sweet cherry'

Malkiel mentions three suffix-types which combine a sense of affinity, descent, provenance etc. with a diminutive sense:

-an e.g.: font-an 'small spring' (39)

-atu[6] refers to the young of animals, birds, plants etc. (47)

e.g.: llebratu 'young hare, leveret'

roblatu 'small oak'

llobatu 'wolf cub'

It may be used as a diminutive, but then it has derogatory connotations.

-ascu/-escu/-iscu/-uescu: a diminutive with a sense of 'small sized' or 'young', 'of tender age' (45):

e.g.: berd-i-asca[7] 'green twig'

fiy-ascu 'stepson'

poll-ascu 'young rooster, cub, whelp', 'boy trying to act like a grown-up'

Malkiel (50) also mentions a derogatory diminutive suffix -eyu.

In addition there are a number of double suffixes, formed by what he calls "interfixes" (14); these are often unproductive suffixes occurring only in combination with a productive suffix. They have the sense of a reinforced diminutive. The elements used are: -err-/-irr-, -iñ-, -ich-/-inch-, -iqu- (this is in fact still productive as a suffix: -icu) e.g.:

pequ-err-iñ-ín	'teeny-weeny'	(14)
pequ-irr-ich-ín		(15)
poqu-err-iñ-ín	'tiny bit'	(15)
mant-iqu-ín	'lover, boy-friend'	(30)

The suffixes -ic-ar and -uc-ar are used with verbs as frequentatives or to express "processes or activities judged with amusement or mild irony" (52) or slowness, gentleness, delicacy, hesitation etc. Of the two, -uc-ar has the more negative connotations e.g.:

llobiu	'rain'	llob-ic-ar	'to drizzle'
trabay-uc-ar	'to work little or to squander one's energy on trivial things demanding no effort'		

(Malkiel 1970:53)

Latin America

As far as the actual suffixes used are concerned, the situation in American Spanish is simpler than that in Spain itself. Basically, -it- is used everywhere, apart from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba and a few other smaller islands in the Carribean, where -ic- prevails.[8] -ill-, sometimes spelled -iy- is used in Western Cuba. Some confusion has been caused by the double suffix -itic-, which is especially common in Costa Rica, but it is also used in other Central American countries as far north as the Mexican border and as far south as Colombia. Many authors[9] have seen in this a separate -tico suffix.

One aspect in which most of American Spanish differs from modern standard Spanish is that of the distribution of the suffixes. One major difference here is the rule which forms a diminutive from a word in /-t/ by means of the form -ic-, even in many of those areas where -it- is the normal suffix, especially north of Peru. I would therefore class -ic- in these areas as an allomorph of -IT-, which in all other cases takes the form -it-[10] - so:

-ITO ⟶ -ico /t_____ ##

⟶ -ito all other cases

e.g.: Ecuador: rato 'a while' ratico 'a short while' (Toscano Mateus 1953:426)

Costa Rica: gato 'tomcat' gatico

fruta 'fruit' frutica (Zamora Elizondo 1945:545)

Colombia: momento 'moment' momentico (Florez 1953:95)

Hasselrot (1957:69) seems to present this as a -tico suffix on his map of Latin American diminutive suffixes, although his text indicates that he is aware of the true nature of -ico. His boundary through Central Ecuador is perhaps somewhat confusing, as in Ecuador this

rule is now largely confined to the countryside and to older speakers (Toscano Mateus 1953:426). This would suggest that it is on the way out and the boundary of -it- in all environments is moving northwards. Another area where American Spanish differs from its European counterpart is that of the linking particle. Although its forms are the same, its distribution is different and, by all accounts, more complicated. Jaeggli (1980) presents a very detailed analysis of what turns out to be Paraguayan Spanish and is based on his own speech. Rojas (1947) attacks the Real Academia on various rules in its grammar, but replaces them with rules for an unspecified American dialect of Spanish. This only goes to show that no clear-cut rules are available for the American dialects as is clear from Jaeggli's comparison of his dialect with "Madrid Spanish" (ibid:155-6) - which turns out to be simpler - and also from the data for Costa Rica given below.

Let us now consider some countries individually and perhaps Costa Rica is one of the most interesting from the point of view of diminutives. The frequent use of diminutives is so striking that even a National Geographic article commented upon it:

> "Even their language is gentle, softened by the widespread use of the diminutive form. Thus, un momento 'one moment' becomes, in Costa Rica, momentico. The practice has led to the nickname ticos. A female tico, of course, is a tica"
>
> (National Geographic Vol.160, No.1, July 1981, p.41-2).

Zamora Elizondo (1945:542) confirms this view:

> "Todos los gramáticos que han estudiado nuestro idioma hacen notar la abundancia de diminutivos que usa nuestro pueblo."
>
> ('All grammarians who have studied our language draw attention to the abundance of diminutives used by our people.')

Although even in the rest of Latin America more diminutives are used than in Spain. The normal Costa Rican suffix is _-ito_, with _-ico_ after a final /-t/.[11] _-illo_ is also used but it has pejorative connotations. In addition it has the double suffix _-it-ic_[12] e.g.:

hermano	'brother'	_hermanitico_
mamá		_mamacitica_

As far as the linking particle is concerned, Costa Rican is less generous than Castilian Spanish, as the following comparison from Zamora Elizondo (1945:546) indicates:

Castilian (Real Academia)		Costa Rican
florecita	'flower'	_florcita_
reinecita	'queen'	_reinita_
lenguecita	'language, tongue'	_lengüita_

In Mexico, the close links between diminutives and reverentials (cf. section on Aztec) in Nahuatl has led to an exceptionally large number of reverential diminutives in Mexican Spanish:

la Virgencita de Guadalupe[13]	'The Virgin + Dim of Guadalupe' (patron saint of Mexico)

The dead are normally referred to as _los Muertecitos_, a reverential originating from the Aztec ancestor cult; also _vosotritos_ (_vosotros_ 'you' (pl)).

In the Andean countries too, the Amerindian substratum has led to an increased use of diminutives, spreading even to categories that do not normally form diminutives in Castillian standard Spanish.[14] In adverbs and participles too they are more common than in Spain. Hasselrot (1957:270) suggests that _-et-_ is still productive in Peru, but I have found no evidence of this. Examples:

rabanito	'a follower of the communist group of Eudocio Rabines' (Benvenutto Murrieta 1936:76)

ven corriendito 'come quickly'

al dia siguiente, tempranito... 'very early + Dim the next day'

date un tiempito y visítame 'take some time + Dim off and visit me'

(Bishop 1974:39-40); Bishop (43) also gives one example of a double diminutive, although she does not comment upon it.

Las casitas son todititas igualitas 'every one of the houses is exactly the same' (todo + Dim + Dim)

Ecuador:

hasta lueguito 'see you soon + Dim' (< hasta luego)

ahicito 'there + Dim'

¿esita no más ha sido? 'was it only that + Dim?'

(Toscano Mateus 1953:423)

Amunátegui Reyes (1904:696) gives the example of

por diosito 'by God + Dim'

in his comparison of Chilean diminutives with the rules laid down by the Real Academia. Zamora Elizondo (1945:543) gives a few examples of diminutives from pronouns in Chilean Spanish:

ningunos	'nobody (pl)'	ningunitos
algunos	'some people'	algunitos

Hasselrot (1957:270-1) mentions a suffix -ich- used in Chili and across the border in Cuyo, Argentina e.g.:

nada	'nothing'	na(d)itita; naichicha

He suggests Basque consonant symbolism as a possible explanation. (There are many Basque settlers in the area), although influence from the local Mapuche language has been proposed by Lenz (1925)(cf. also Sieberer 1950-52:116).

Argentine Spanish knows a number of peculiar diminutive formations. In the North, the Andean influence leads to diminutives from pronouns,

numerals etc. Hasselrot (1957:271) gives:

esto	'this'	estito
cinco	'five'	cinquito
mucho	'much, many'	muchito

He also mentions complicated multiple suffixes:

cerca	'near, close'	cerquititititita 'near + Dim + Dim + Dim + Dim

Finally Jaeggli (1980:156) mentions a number of Argentinian diminutives formed by means of a true infix. This infix takes the same form as the suffix -it- e.g.:

azúcar	'sugar'	azuquitar
Víctor	'Victor'	Victitor

Jaeggli concludes that this phenomenon is limited to one environment:

$$X \left\{\begin{matrix} o \\ a \end{matrix}\right\} r + Dim \longrightarrow X\text{-it-} \left\{\begin{matrix} o \\ a \end{matrix}\right\} r$$

The different domains and usage of Spanish diminutives are discussed at various points in Chapters 1-8.

Portuguese

Portuguese probably uses more diminutives than any other Romance language.[1] As a result, it is even more difficult than for other languages discussed so far, to give a comprehensive picture of diminutives in Portuguese. An outline of the basic principles will have to suffice. The number of suffixes used in Portuguese is relatively small. -inh- and -it- are used over virtually all of Portugal and Brazil. Some dialects add to these a few other suffixes, some of which may dominate in certain areas. These will be mentioned briefly.

-inh- (-inho/-inha) e.g.:

filha	'daughter'	filhinha	'little daughter'
peixe	'fish'	peixinho	'little fish'
casa	'house'	casinha	'little house'
rapaz	'boy'	rapazinho	'little boy'

-it- (-ito/-ita) e.g.:

filho	'son'	filhito	'small son'
boca	'mouth'	boquita	'small mouth'
criada	'child'	criadita	'small child'
livro	'book'	livrito	'small book'

In some cases, a linking particle -z- is placed between the base and the suffix. Ettinger (1972 and 1974) finds the origin for this - and similar linking particles[2] in Spanish and Italian - in Latin. I refer to his article and book and to the section on Spanish in this thesis. Briefly, he concludes that in Portuguese, the rules governing its use are as follows (Ettinger 1974:201-202; 1972:107-108):

- all monosyllabic words in a vowel use the particle.
- all words in a nasal vowel use it.
- it is often, though not always, used with final /-l/ and final /-r/.
- words which used the particle in Latin use it in Portuguese.

Apart from these general rules, there are a number of dialect differences First of all socially: the educated classes are more likely to use the linking particle. According to Silvia Skorge (1956:86) because it "... mantém o radical inteiro e a sua pronúncia inalterada" ('... leaves the root intact and its pronunciation unchanged.') There are also regional differences. The Northern dialects use it more than those of the South. In fact in the province of Beira, -zito has virtually become a separate suffix.

With adjectives, the situation is more straight-forward. Here, only monosyllabic forms use -z- and only a few polysyllabic adjectives use it (cf. Skorge 1956:68-78).

examples:			
	só	'alone, lonely'	sòzinho
	café	'coffee'	cafèzinho
	manhã	'morning'	manhãzinha

As was already suggested by the glosses, there is a difference between -inh- and -it-. In the areas where they exist side by side, -it- refers primarily to limited size and -inh- has primarily emotional uses. "Das Diminutivsuffix, das im Portugiesischen mit Vorliebe affektisch verwendet wird, ist -inho .... Als eigentlich verkleinerndes Suffix ist -ito häufiger als -inho." (Wagner 1952:403) Skorge (1956:62) agrees with this for standard Portuguese: "Em geral, pode-se comprovar que -ito é mais diminutivo e -inho mais afectivo." Although, she adds that in some dialects especially Trás-os-Montes, Beira and Alentejo, this difference is less marked. It has already been shown that the diminutive suffixes are productive both on nouns and on adjectives. As well as these two categories, adverbs, pronouns and even verbs have been known to form diminutives. On verbs, they are the least productive and apart from a limited productivity in child language, virtually all examples are lexicalised e.g.:

dormir	'to sleep'	dormitar	'to doze, nap etc.'

Often past participles, when used adverbially, form diminutives. (Sttau Monteiro 1960:35, 148) e.g.:

bem trabalhadinho	'well worked + Dim'
bem exploradinho	'well explored + Dim'

Diminutives are more productive on adverbs:

baixo (adj & adv) 'low'	baixinho	(Ettinger 1974:186)

junto	'together'	juntinho	(Ettinger 1974:189)
agora	'now'	agorinha	(Ettinger 1974:190)
devagar	'slow'	devagarinho	(Skorge: 303)

Diminutives formed from pronouns do exist, but they are rare. Skorge (1956:305) mentions

nosso	'our'	nossinho
ambos	'both together'	ambinhos

In Brazil, these forms are more productive,[3] and Wagner (1952:473) gives:

ela	'she'	elazinha
uma	'one'	umazinha

Apparently, diminutive is also more productive on verbs in Brazil as Wagner (ibid) points out:

foi	'I was'	foizinho
estou	'I am'	estouzinho[4]
não querzinho comer nada	'he/she does not want + Dim to eat anything'	

Of the adjectives, pequeno[5] forms more diminutives than any other. Skorge (1956:272) "Ao descrever vivamente uma coisa pequena o adjectivo simples já não parece suficiente para traduzir adequadamente as ideias daquele que fala." ('when describing something small vividly, the simple adjective does not seem to be sufficient for adequately translating the ideas of the speaker'.)

In colloquial language, the base form has completely disappeared in favour of various derived forms: pequenino, pequeninho (Minho Prov.), pequenininho (double Dim), pequeniquinho (double Dim). In Beira, whose dialect uses a greater variety of suffixes than most, the following are heard: pequenito, pequenitito, pequenicho, pequenichito, pequenichichinho (triple Dim), pequenico, pequenicozito, pequeninico.

It was mentioned at the beginning of this section that other suffixes are used apart from -inh- and -it-. Skorge (1956) mentions a large number some of which are no longer productive; others are as productive, if not more so, than -inh- and -it-. The clearest way to show their geographical distribution is by means of a map. The accompanying map is based on Skorge (1956). I will discuss some of the more common suffixes separately, as most of the suffixes included in the map are virtually non-productive. Even so some very rare suffixes mentioned by Skorge are not included in the map.

-ic- and -ec- are both included in Ettinger's (1974) analysis of Portuguese diminutives. According to Ettinger (1974:223), -ec- either refers to small size or is pejorative or both; -ic- is used mainly with verbs. Only a few words can be modified with -ec- and they can also take -inh-. Allen (1941:32) expresses doubt about the existence of this suffix.

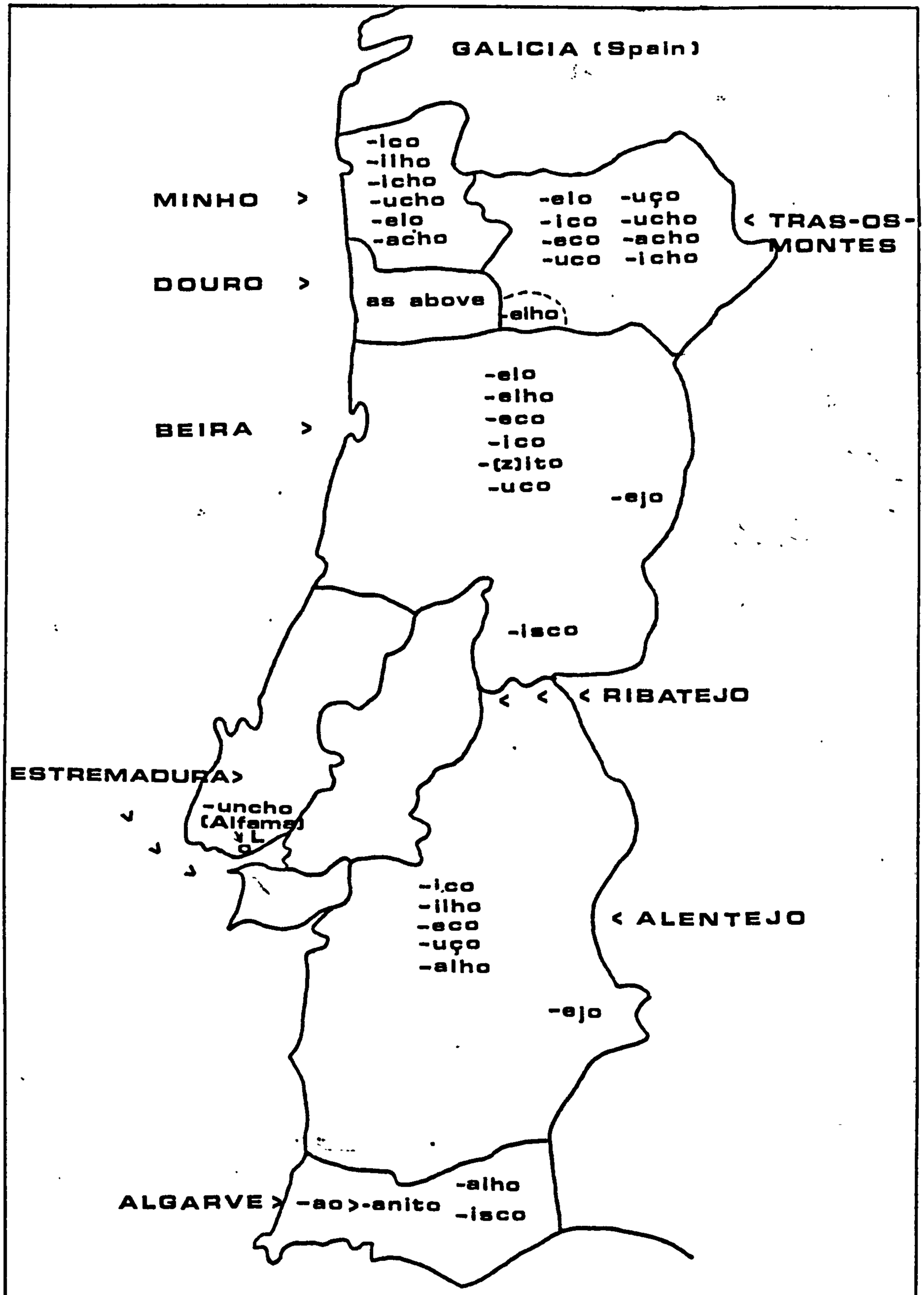
burro	'donkey'	burreco	'donkey + Dim (Pej)
doutor	'doctor'	doutoreco	'doctor + Dim (Pej)

(Ettinger 1974:224)

beber	'to drink'	beberricar	'to tipple'
tossir	'to cough'	tossicar	

(Ettinger 1974:196)

According to Skorge (1956:29) -ec- is only still productive in Trás-os-Montes, although examples do exist in other dialects. -ic- is mainly a hypocoristic suffix according to Skorge (28) used especially in the North and East of the country. Allen (1941:50) supports this view e.g.: Anica, Antonico, Joanico, Manuelico, Jacintico etc. -oc- has ceased to be productive and -uc- is only productive in the Mirandês dialect (N.E.), although some diminutive forms with this suffix occur in other parts of Trás-os-Montes and in Beira.


GALICIA (Spain)
MINHO >
-ico
-ilho
-icho
-ucho
-elo
-acho
-elo -uço
-ico -ucho
-eco -acho
-uco -icho
< TRAS-OS-MONTES
DOURO >
as above
-elho
BEIRA >
-elo
-elho
-eco
-ico
-(z)ito
-uco
-ejo
-isco
< < < RIBATEJO
ESTREMADURA>
-uncho
(Alfama)
-i,co
-ilho
-eco
-uço
-alho
< ALENTEJO
-ejo
ALGARVE >
-ao>-anito
-alho
-isco
(based on Skorge 1956)

-et- and -ot-: these suffixes too are included by Ettinger (1974: 197, 205ff), Allen (1941:41-45) and Skorge (1956:20-31). -ot- is more productive in all dialects than -et- which occurs mainly in French and Italian loans. -ot- does have a wide range of different meanings, varying from diminutive, through pejorative and collective to augmentative. Both are used in standard Portuguese, although Skorge (1956:25) explains that -et- is considered "mais vulgar" than -ot- by many Portuguese. Ettinger (ibid) has discovered that nouns referring to humans can take either -et- or -inho-, whereby -et- has more negative connotations e.g.:

malandro	'malingerer'	malandrete	idem + Dim (pej)
malandrinho	more endearing, normally used for children		

With other nouns, lexicalisation has often taken place thus leading to a complementary distribution of -inh- and -et-. For adjectives, Ettinger perceives a difference between an intensifying -inh- and the detracting -et e.g.: alegrete 'a little drunk' (Ettinger:207). He also concludes that -ot- is only still productive with animate ("belebt") nouns (213) and with adjectives (214).

The map shows a number of other relatively rare suffixes. -ej- occurs mainly in regions bordering Spain and is borrowed from Spanish. According to Allen (1941:37) it only occurs in Spanish loans and is not productive. Skorge (1956:37), however, claims it is still productive in the border regions of Beira and Alentejo e.g.: hortejo 'little garden'. -ol- is productive in standard Portuguese as a diminutive and pejorative suffix e.g.: bolinho 'cake, bolinholo 'little cake' (Allen 1941:64).

Accumulation of suffixes is relatively rare in Portuguese. Some examples can be found, though. (Some have already been discussed

above under diminutive forms of pequeno.) Skorge (1950:51) explains this scarcity by the fact that the simple diminutive has not lost any of its force. This may be true, however, Ettinger (1974:226) shows that in Old Portuguese these accumulations were not uncommon. Ettinger (1974:227) gives the following diagram to show the few combinations that do occur productively.[6]

position 1	position 2
-inh-	-ol-
-inh-	-ot-
-alh-[7]	-ot-

In addition, there are a number of suffix combinations that have become fixed. Some of these are combinations of unproductive suffixes. Others, however, still have one productive member: -achit-, -achinh-, -ochit-, -ochinh-, -ilhão,[8] -elhão - or have become fixed even though both members are separately still productive: -etão, -inhot-, -inhol- are given by Ettinger (1974:228) who also gives a number of productive double suffixes: -alhaç-, -alhão, -alhot- - and the following examples e.g.:

pouco	'a little'	poucachito
		poucachinho
		poucochito
		poucochinho
ponte	'bridge'	pontilhão
casa	'house'	casinhota
amigo	'friend'	amigalhote

Many of these forms have negative connotations, especially those involving an augmentative suffix. Forms involving two diminutive suffixes may be endearing.

This brings us to the semantics of Portuguese diminutives. They refer of course to small size, especially with -it-:

livro	'book'	livrito	'small book'

(Wagner 1952:403)

On the whole, diminutives are used to express endearment or in some cases contempt. they are therefore commonly used around the home e.g. for hypocoristics: Joanico, Candidinha, kinship terms (cf. Skorge 1956:241, 237).

mãe	'mother'	mãezinha	'granny' (endearing)

(Allen 1941:56)

avó	'grandmother'	avòzinha	'granny'
tio	'uncle'	tiozinho, tizinho	
irmã	'sister'	irmãzinha	

Domestic pets: cãe 'dog' cãezinho and also familiar objects foods, etc. But here, Portuguese goes much further than other European languages. Attempts have been made to categorise the different uses of diminutives in Portuguese and the domains in which they occur. I refer in particular to the studies of Wagner (1952), Maças (1954-55) who limits herself to adjectives, and Skorge (1956). Especially the last study is very detailed and we can only reach the conclusion from Skorge's work that the Portuguese will use a diminutive whenever any sort of emotional involvement exists. I have tried to reduce this huge and rather vague area to a few general categories:

- - - child domain: diminutives are used in addressing children and in referring to them, parts of their body or their games, toys and other objects.

Adoro o meu filhinho	'I adore my son + Dim (Skorge 238)
Jogar às escondidinhas	'to play hide and seek' (Skorge 251)

- - - lovers' language too is full of endearing diminutives.

palavras de amor que lhe iam direitinhas ao coração

'words of love which went directly + Dim to her (or his) heart'

(Maças 221) Portuguese popular tradition knows many 4-line love poems or "trovas", which usually include diminutives:

lencinho encarnadinho 'Handkerchief + Dim red + Dim'

lavadinho com sabão 'washed + Dim with soap'

não há olhos para amar 'there are no eyes to love

como são os de João like those of John' (Wagner 472)

- - - to express friendship, camaraderie or give friendly advice, often in phatic communion, greetings etc.

Bom dia, está boazinha? 'Good day, are you well + Dim' (Skorge 297)

Adeuzinho o bem hajam! 'Good bye + Dim, keep well!'

Até loguinho! 'see you soon + Dim' (Skorge 241)

minha querida amiguinha 'my dear friend + Dim + F' (Skorge 241)

Atençãozinha! 'careful now + Dim! (Skorge 240)

- - - expressing pleasure of some kind: this may involve enjoyment of food or drink, a comfortable, secure life, place or situation, and beauty.

chàzinho, cafèzinho 'tea + Dim', 'coffee + Dim'

e um vinho ténue, madurinho 'It is a smooth, mature + Dim wine' (Macas 226)

branquinho de neve 'snow white' (Macas 227)

a minha terrinha; a terrinha natal 'my country + Dim; the native land + Dim' (Skorge 234)

"a santa vidinha" "the pleasant comfortable life"

Tens o lugar quentinho 'you've got the place nice and warm' (lit: warm + Dim)(Skorge 294)

- - - wistfulness and wish fulfillment: often related to saudade, an important element in Portuguese popular culture, similar to the "Sehnsucht" of the German Romantics.

Quando era solteirinha 'when I was single + Dim'

Ah! tivessem eles assim um barquinho, que não queriam mais nada 'Oh! if only they had a boat (+ Dim) like that, they never wanted anything so much' (Skorge 236)

- - - expressions of shock, anger, forceful affirmation or negation:

S'ela aqui vem, estrafego-a todinha 'if she comes, I will tear her to pieces completely + Dim' (Maças 225)

Palavrinha! 'my word!' (Skorge 245)

Nada, nadinha! 'nothing, nothing + Dim'

Santinha paciência! 'holy + Dim patience!' (Wagner 470)

- - - expression of pity, pathos, compassion etc.

Lá estava .... a pobre casinha 'There it was, the poor little house' (Skorge 228)

Ela está mais melhorzinha 'she is much better + Dim' (Wagner 468)

cortidinho de dôres 'torn with grief' (Wagner 468)

Ai! pobrezinha. Que está tão magrinha 'Oh, poor little one she is so thin + Dim '(Maças 230)

- - - humour, irony:

Estes portuguesinhos! É preciso cuidado com eles!

'Those Portuguese + Dim + Plu! You have to be careful with them' (Skorge 230)

Humorous effect can also be achieved by manipulating any of the other categories. This manipulative use can also have other purposes:

- politeness

Obrigada, obrigadinha![9] 'Thank you, thank you very much indeed' (female speaker)(Skorge 297)

- euphemism: for playing down serious matters like death, disease, insult etc.

ir para os anjinhos 'to go to the angels + Dim' (Skorge 230)

e o menino dele afogadinho 'and his little boy drowned + Dim' (Maças 228)

céquinho 'blind + Dim'(This is at least as common as its non-Dim form)

é um mentirozinho 'it is a lie + Dim' (Skorge 227)

Desculpe-me, mas isso parece-me uma cobardiazinha 'Excuse me, but that seems like cowardice + Dim to me' (Wagner 467)

The term arranjinho is used for an illicit love affair. (Wagner 469)

- pleading, placating of people higher up the social ladder or of saints, God etc.; and persuasion of salesmen

Faça-me o favorzinho de ... 'Do me a favour + Dim and ...' (Skorge 239)

Dê uma esmola a um céguinho; a um pobrezinho 'give alms to a [blind man] + Dim; to a [poor man] + Dim (Skorge 295)

Uvas, bananas madurinhas 'ripe + Dim grapes, bananas' (Skorge 296)

S. João, de Deus Amado, Santinho de Deus querido (St John, loved by God, saint + Dim loved by God'

Finally, there are many pejorative uses of diminutives in Portuguese: "Ha umas certas boquinhas gravezinhas e espremidinhas pela doutorice que são a mais aborrecidinha coisa e a mais pequinha que Deus permite fazer às suas criaturas fêmeas".

'There are certain grave + Dim and squeezed mouths + Dim for know-alls which are the most tedious + Dim thing and the most trivial + Dim that God allows to be done to his female creatures' (Maças 223).

If a diminutive is used to describe a man, it is even more insulting. Skorge (1956:227-8) gives:

O homenzinho não está bom da cabeça

'The man + Dim is not well in his head'

mariquinha pej. term for a male homosexual

Rumanian

Rumanian has a larger number of different diminutive suffixes than any other Romance language. Ettinger (1974) lists 26 suffixes and Puşcariu (1899; 1902) even mentions 41, although most of these are either very rare or they are variations of one of the other suffixes. Even going through every single one of Ettinger's 26 suffixes, is outside the scope of the present work, although I will try to give examples of most of them.

The suffixes given by Ettinger (1974:278) are as follows:

-uleţ, -şor, -işor, -uşor, -şoară, -işoară, -uşoară,
-uliţă, -icică, -ulică, -uşica, -icel, -icea, -el,
-ea, -aş, -uşă, -ică, -uţ, -iţă, -uş, -uţă, -ior,
-ioară, -uc, -ucă

Puşcariu (1899:24) does not attempt to give any rule to predict which suffix goes with which stem: "Ein Kriterium, welches uns belehren könnte, wann gewisse Suff. diminuieren dürfen, giebt es nicht: lediglich der Gebrauch ist bestimmend und ist auch dialektisch ziemlich feststehend ... würde jeder Versuch scheitern, wollte man für jedes Suff. Regeln aufzustellen suchen, nach welchen es Wörter mit bestimmtem Auslaut bevorzugt"

Ettinger (1974:277) nevertheless attempts to find such rules. One of his findings is a useful generalisation, when he states that the final consonant of the base word is not repeated in the suffix. After this, he gets bogged down in extremely complicated statements based on findings that some suffix has a slightly greater tendency to occur after one particular phoneme than another, all of which is too involved for our purposes and I refer to Ettinger (1974:278-352). One interesting general observation he does make is that some of the suffixes are far more likely to occur after a monosyllabic stem[1] and others after a bisyllabic stem. According to this behaviour, he divides the 26 suffixes into 4 groups. In group one there are hardly any exceptions: (278, 285)

	Monosyllabic Stem	Bisyllabic Stem
m/f:	-uleţ, -işor, -şor	-el; -aş
	-uşor, -icel	
f:	-şoară, -isoară, -uşoară,	-ea, -uşă
	-ulică, -icică, -uliţă	-ică
	-uşică, -icea	

In group two there are more exceptions but there is still a strong tendency one way or the other (1974:278):

-uţ, -iţă -uş , -uţă

In group three there is no clear-cut preference. This group contains -ior/-ioară (1974:278). In the final group, Ettinger places those suffixes for which his data are too limited to find the necessary information. Its members are mainly regional dialect suffixes like -uc/-ucă. Ettinger does not include the suffix -andru which is mentioned both by Nandriş (1945:144) and Puşcariu (1899:138; 1902:225) and which is a loan from Greek. It is used for animate beings and seems to refer to the young of an animal or human e.g.:

băiat 'boy', băieţandru 'young boy'

căţel 'puppy', căţelandru 'puppy'

(Nandriş 1945:144)

For the other examples, I will follow Ettinger's list of suffixes.

-uleţ:	corb	'raven'	corbuleţ
	lac	'lake'	lăculeţ
	pod	'bridge'	poduleţ

(Ettinger 1974:286)

	râu	'river'	râuleţ 'small river'
	sac	'bag'	săculeţ 'small bag'

(Nandriş 1945:145)

These forms are very common (Puşcariu 1902:196).

-işor:	pod	'bridge'	podişor 'a small bridge'
	băţ	'stick'	beţişor 'a small stick'

(Nandriş 1945:145)

an	'year'	an-işor
pom	'tree'	pomişor
tată	'feather'	tătişor

(Ettinger 1974:290-1)

-şor:	lac		lăcşor (Ettinger 289)
	leu	Rom. currency	leuşor (Ettinger 291)
	crai	'king'	crăişor (Ettinger 289)
-uşor:	corb	'raven'	corbuşor (292)
	porc	'pig'	porcuşor (292)
	om	'person'	omuşor (293)
-icel:	vînt	'wind'	vînticel (Ettinger 305)
	sat	'village'	săticel (Ettinger 305)
-şoară:	oi	'sheep'	oişoară (Ettinger 297)
	zi	'day'	ziuşoară (Ettinger 297)

-işoară:	sticlă	'glass'	sticlişoară (Ettinger 297,298)
	fată	'girl'	fetişoară (Ettinger 297,298)
-uşoară:	vacă	'cow'	văcuşoară (Ettinger 299)
	mamă	'mother'	mamuşoară (Ettinger 299)
-uliţa:	maică	'mother'	măiculiţă (Ettinger 301)
	taică	'father'	tăiculiţă (Ettinger 301)
	furcă	'fork'	furculiţă 'fork (for eating)' (Nandriş 146)
-icică:	floare	'flower'	floricică (Ettinger 303)
	fată	'girl'	feticică (Ettinger 303)
-icea:	floare	'flower'	floricea (Ettinger 305)
	piatră	'stone'	pietricea (Ettinger 305)
-aş:	purice	'flea'	puricaş (Ettinger 307)
	păcurar	'shepherd'	păcurrăraş (Ettinger 309)
-el:	băiat	'boy'	băieţel 'little boy'
	scaun	'chair'	scăunel 'a small chair' (Nandriş 145)
	vultur	'eagle'	vulturel (Ettinger 313)
	ţigan	'gipsy'	ţigănel (Ettinger 312)
-uşă:	găină	'hen'	găinuşă (Ettinger 321)
-ea:	pasăre	'bird'	păsărea (Ettinger 321)
-ică:	pasăre		păsărică (Ettinger 322, Nandriş 145)
	Ion	'John'	Ionică 'Johnny' (Nandriş 145)
-uţ:	plug	'plough'	pluguţ (Ettinger 329)
	şoarece	'mouse'	şoricuţ (Ettinger 330)
-iţă:	barbă	'beard'	bărbiţă (Ettinger 322)
	insulă	'island'	insuliţă (Ettinger 333)

	poartă	'gate'	portiţă	'small gate' (Nandris 145)
-uţă:	casă	'house'	căsuţă	'small house'
	cal	'horse'	căluţă	'little horse' (Nandriş 146)
	babă	'old woman'	băbuţă	(Ettinger 338)
	bunică	'grandmother'	bunicuţă	(Ettinger 339)

etc.

In some cases, e.g. băiat băieţel, there is a vowel change as well as suffixation. There are no hard and fast rules about this as there is considerable dialect variation (Puşcariu 1899:28-30). With stems in an unstressed vowel, this vowel is usually dropped before suffixation (Puşcariu 1899:29; 1902:115). As well as nouns, adjectives are frequently diminutivised in Rumanian. Ettinger (1980:186) indicates that some adverbs form diminutives e.g.:

lung	'long'	lungulel	(Ettinger 1974:287)
mic	'small'	micşor	(Ettinger 1974:289)
		micuşor	(Ettinger 1974:292)
mult	'much, many'	multişor	(Ettinger 1974:291)
		mulţişor	
mare	'large, big'	măricică	(Ettinger 1974:303)
		măricel	(Ettinger 1974:305)
cald	'warm'	căldicel	(Ettinger 1974:305)
singur	'alone'	singuraş	(Ettinger 1974:310)
		singuratic	(Puşcariu 1899:12)
puţin(adv)	'a little'	puţinel	(Ettinger 1974:312)

Puşcariu (1899:22) gives some diminutive interjections e.g. aolică! expression of shocked surprise (<aoleu!). Accumulation of suffixes is not as common as in Italian for example and considering the vast number of suffixes used in Rumanian is relatively rare.

Normally these consist of a double diminutive suffix e.g.:

pat pătucel 'bed + (Dim + Dim)

They are common on kinship terms: e.g.:

tată tătucuţă 'father' (Ettinger 1974:364-5)

mamă mămiţică 'mother'

mămucuţă

and with hypocoristics where Puşcariu (1899:31) even gives the example of a triple suffix:

mariţa - Mariţica - Mariţicuţa

He explains this by stating that in daily use, the endearing effect of the suffix gets lost, so new suffixes are added to retain this effect (ibid).

Something else, which is relatively rare in Rumanian, is the analytic diminutive, by means of mic 'small': "... ce qui prouve une propension minime des diminutifs analytiques." (Hasselrot 1957:222) Mic does often occur with a synthetic diminutive: mică cămăruţă (ibid) 'a small little room'. Unlike synthetic diminutives in most other languages, Rumanian diminutives do not have a pejorative sense. There is a strict division between the affective, endearing diminutive and the much rarer pejorative augmentative. In fact "... la note caressante est si étroitement liée à la diminution que l'un des premiers grammairiens roumains ... appelle les diminutifs des suffixes "caressants" ou "câlins"." (Puşcariu 1937:309). Puşcariu blames the occasional pejorative use of diminutives by Rumanian authors on foreign influence. This, however "..., sonne faux en roumain ..." (ibid).

It is possible by mixing diminutive and augmentative suffixes to achieve various shades of meaning (cf. Puşcariu 1937:308). No specialisation in meaning seems to have taken place among the many diminutive suffixes and degrees of affection have to be expressed by paralinguistic means:

"...; il me semble que seuls le ton et l'interprétation subjective font qu'un suffixe nous paraît plus expressif qu'un autre."

(Puşcariu 1937:308; cf. also Puşcariu 1899:25). Apart from the suffixes as outlined so far Hasselrot (1957:223) mentions another type of formation with a diminutive sense; namely a certain type of reduplication.[2]

e.g. <u>fată tînără-tînerică</u> 'une fille toute jeunette'

Puşcariu (1899; 1902) mentions gender in relation to diminutives and he explains that "Eine Eigentümlichkeit, die sich sowohl im Rom. als auch im Slav. wiederfindet, ist es, bei intensiver Liebkosung dem Suff. das dem Primit. entgegengesetzte Geslecht zu geben"[3] (Puşcariu 1899:27). Related to this may be the fact that some suffixes are only used on nouns of a specific gender. When these are used on a noun of the other gender, the gender of the diminutive changes. So a certain gender is connected with the suffix. This is very similar to the Dutch, German and Yiddish diminutive suffixes which make nouns neuter. The suffix itself as it were has the gender. Thus <u>-ică</u>, <u>-iţă</u> are normally used with feminine nouns and if they are used with a masculine noun it becomes feminine.

e.g. <u>Ion</u> (m) 'John' <u>Ionică</u>, <u>Ioniţă</u> (f) (Puşcariu 1899:27)

The suffix <u>-iţă</u> is also used in this way as a feminine marker on names of professions.

e.g. <u>un doctor</u> - <u>o doctoriţă</u> 'a female doctor'

Many of the familiar diminutive domains have already largely become clear from the examples, however a short review may be helpful.

- hypocoristics; Puşcariu (1899:8-9; 1902:93-4) gives a list of some of the most common hypocoristic forms. e.g. Maria - Marica, Măriuca, Mariţa, Măriora, Măriuţa, Mariţica, Maricuţa, Mariţicuţa, Marişca, Maruşca, Marina, Marinuţa, Măriniţa, Mărinica, Marişcuţa, etc.

- kinship terms are very commonly made into diminutives, e.g. mătuşă 'aunt'; as are ...

- animals. Some names of animals and ...

- plants do not often form diminutives, because most of their names already have a diminutive form. Puşcariu (1899:13-20 and 1902:98-105; 1937:306) discusses these in some detail. Ettinger (1980:138) calls these "unechte Diminutive".

- names for common foods, tools, familiar objects, e.g. carne de purcel for 'pork', "ici le diminutif veut simplement exprimer la succulence ou la fraîcheur de la viande" (Puşcariu 1937:311).

- environmental phenomena. Here too we have the problem of "unechte Diminutive" in that many diminutives are used in this area for specific changes in meaning. A diminutive derived from the name of a river for example refers to a tributary of that river; from the name of a mountain range the diminutive form refers to an isolated summit, etc. (Puşcariu 1937:306 and see also 3.6).

Most of the "unechte Diminutive" refer to the secondary meaning of the Rumanian diminutive suffixes, i.e. the sense of being 'similar to, but not the same as ...':[4]

> "Quand nous avons affaire à des noms d'objets, le diminutif désigne souvent un objet semblable a celui qu'exprime le mot primitif, sans qu'il soit absolument nécessaire que cet objet soit plus petit." (Puşcariu 1937:307).

Papiamentu

Papiamentu - a creole spoken in the Dutch West Indies - does not have a productive diminutive system as such, but it has a number of fossilised diminutives from other languages in its lexicon. Most of the lexicon comes from Spanish and Portuguese and some diminutives from these languages survive, e.g.: kasita 'little house'

chikí/chikitu 'small, little'

bunita 'beautiful'

(only exists in its Dim. form in Spanish & Portuguese)

galiña 'chick, girl-friend'

These form only a small proportion of the Spanish-Portuguese component of the lexicon. Of the words borrowed from Dutch, which are far fewer than the Iberian component, a very large number, if not most of the nouns occur in their diminutive form, even though the diminutive sense has been lost.

e.g. Papiamentu		Dutch	
bleki	'tin can'	blikje	'tin can' + Dim
kopi	'cup'	kop-je	'cup' + Dim
buki	'book'	boek-je	'book' + Dim
kuki	'cake, biscuit'	koek-je	'biscuit'
sardinchi	'sardines'	sardien-tje-s	'sardine' + Dim+plu
popchi	'doll'	pop-je/poppetje	'doll' + Dim
karchi[1]	'ticket'	kaart-je	'ticket'
pastechi	'vol-au-vent'	pastei-tje	'vol-au-vent'
depchi	'10 cent coin'	dubbeltje	'10 cent coin'
kuashi	'paint-brush'	kwast-je	'paint-brush' + Dim
bonchi	'beans'	boon-tje-s	'bean' + Dim+plu

Most of the Dutch forms are in fact more common as diminutives, however some of them are relatively rare in their diminutivised form, for example das or boek are much more frequently heard than dasje or boekje. The majority of these Dutch loans have a root which ends in a stop, a liquid or a nasal in Dutch. These are very rare in word-final position in Papiamentu, which prefers open syllables. This desire for open syllables seems the most likely explanation for the marked preference for adopting Dutch words in their diminutive form; even those few words which in the original language are relatively rare as diminutives. In addition there is the fact, highlighted by van Marle (1978:63) and discussed in the section on Afrikaans, that in a "contact language" such as Papiamentu must have been originally, overgeneralisation of derivational morphology is very common. Papiamentu normally uses chikí/chikitu to express a diminutive. This syntactic diminutive also expresses a large number of emotional connotations.

e.g. Mama un kos chikí mes ta bon

'mother' 'a' 'thing''small/little' 'even' 'is' 'good'

'mother, even a little thing is good'

(from: de Jesus, Philipsen and Pieters 1978:22)

Lithuanian

In both Lithuanian and Latvian,[1] a large number of diminutive suffixes are used. It is understandable, therefore, that some specialisation has occurred. Diminutives are used very frequently in Lithuanian, especially those formed with the -ẽlis(m) / -ẽlė(f) suffix which form about half the diminutives in the language. It is used primarily

to refer to small objects, people, animals etc, although it can have emotional connotations too e.g.:

mažulẽlė mãno			'my poor little one'	(95)
bernẽlis	'chap'	berniukẽlis	'little boy'	(109)
sesuõ	'sister'	seserẽlė	'little sister'	(97)

(Brender 1925)

tė́vas	'father'	tėvẽlis	'daddy'
brólis	'brother'	brolẽlis	'dear little brother'
		broterẽlis	

(Endzelīns 1971:111)

There are a large number of lexicalised examples with this suffix, often next to, and with the same meaning as, their base form:

gegužė̃, gegužė̃lė	'cuckoo'	(Brender 95)
dìlgė, dilgėlẽ	'nettle'	(Endzelīns 111)
musẽ, musėlẽ	'fly'	(Endzelīns 111)

Brender also mentions the following diminutive suffixes.

-ũkas/-ùkė: this suffix often has humorous or slightly negative or sarcastic connotations (Brender 1925:93-94). Used almost exclusively with masculine nouns: e.g.:

buteliùkas	'bottle + Dim'
stikliùkas	'glass + Dim'
velniùkas	'little devil'

(Brender 93)

šuniùkas	'puppy'
jautũkas, jaučiùkas	'small male calf'

(Endzelīns 116)

-ũtis/-ùtė: is used to form "diminutives with a nuance of endearment" (Endzelīns 126) e.g.:

Dievũtis 'God + Dim'

vaikũtis 'child + Dim'

pirštùtis 'finger + Dim'

(Endzelīns 1971:126)

-ùlis/-ùlė: this suffix expresses diminutives slightly more emotional than -ùtis. It is often used with kinship terms. Brender (95) believes that this is a hypocoristic suffix rather than a diminutive suffix. This is not entirely borne out by the examples, although they could be considered closely related to hypocoristics or kinship terms. Endzelīns (1971) does not appear to mention this suffix. e.g.:

ponùlis 'dear Sir'

bičiùlis 'dear friend'

nėnùlis 'moon + Dim'

(Brender 1925:95)

Kinship terms:

tė́vas	'father'	tevùlis	'father + Dim'
mõtė	'mother'	motùlė	'mother + Dim'
sesuõ	'sister'	sesùlė	'sister + Dim'

(Brender 1925:97)

-ýtis/-ýtė: Brender lists this suffix too as being used primarily with kinship terms (98) e.g.:

brolýtis 'brother + Dim' (82)

sesýtė 'sister + Dim' (110)

but Brender also gives:

balandýti 'little dove' (94)

senũtė 'dear little old woman' (94)

while Endzelīns (1971:125) claims that this suffix "... denotes extremely young living creatures or very tiny things (with a connotation of endearment)" e.g.:

vilkýtis	'wolf cub'	
sūnýtis	'small son'	
vištýtis	'chick'	
žąsýtis	'gosling'	

(ibid)

-ūžis/-ūžė: this is a fairly rare suffix used mainly with feminine nouns, with "pathetic " connotations (Brender 1975:99). It is mainly used with nouns with the sense of 'love', 'happiness', 'sun', or 'daughter', 'girl', etc. (Brender 1925:100) e.g.:

mė́ilė	'love	Meilùžė	name for a girl
dukrùžė	'little daughter'		
saulùžė	'the dear sun'		

(Brender 1925:98)

Endzelīns (1971:120) lists it simply as a diminutive of endearment e.g.: brolùžis 'nice, dear little brother'

mergùže 'dear little girl'

-áitis/áitė:[2] seems to refer primarily to small size without affective connotations e.g.:

langáitis	'small window'
vilkáitis	'small wolf'
vaikáitis	'small child'
žvirbláitis	'small sparrow'

(Endzelīns 126)

In addition to these, there are a few complex suffixes, made up of two other ones:

- -užė̃lis/-užė̃lė

e.g.: drabùžis > drabužė̃lis 'little dress' (Brender 95)

- -ū́kštis: has stronger pejorative connotations than -ūkas

e.g.: varlė̂ (f) 'frog' varliū́kštis (m) 'miserable little frog'

velniūkštis 'you little devil'

(Brender 98; Endezlīns 128)

Brender (1925:98) believes that the gender change is related to the diminutive meaning. It may just be the case that -ūkštis as a suffix takes a masculine gender, although Endzelīns also mentions a feminine example with this suffix:

mergūkštė 'girl + Dim' (128)

-ikáitis: this suffix points to an -ik- diminutive suffix in the lexicalised example:

jannikáitis 'young man + Dim'

(Brender 1925:72,100)

This -ik suffix is not mentioned by Brender but it is mentioned by Endzelīns (115):

puodìkas 'little pot'

staldìkas 'small stable' etc.

Endzelīns mentions the following suffixes, not included by Brender:

- -ik-: I have already mentioned this above;
- -ūtis/-ūtė: this suffix seems to refer primarily to the young of animals e.g.:

katūtis 'little cat'

varliūtis 'small frog'

vilkiūtis 'little wolf'

peliūte 'small mouse'

(Endzelīns 1971:127)

- -ist- e.g.:

ėriščias 'lambkin'

rañkiščia 'tiny hand' (of a child)

(ibid)

Slavic suffixes are sometimes used in Lithuanian e.g.:

mergélka

dainùška (< daina, a kind of tale, story)

(Brender 82)

Something which has not yet become clear from the examples given above is the frequent use of the suffixes for the formation of hypocoristics Hypocoristics can be formed by shortening the stem e.g.: Vlâdas; to these the suffixes may then be added e.g.:

Vladiùkas (Brender 100)

Marìkė (Endzelīns 115)

Most diminutives are formed from nouns, but adjectives, adverbs and verbs may also form diminutives. For verbs, a special suffix is used:

-t·elė́ti (or -t·erė́ti): this suffix is used only with verbs e.g.:

murmtelė́ti 'murmur' (lit: 'to talk only a little bit')

linktelė́ti 'to nod once', 'to nod a little'

(Brender 84)

Adjectives and adverbs use the same suffixes as nouns. Brender (1925:97,103) believes that these diminutives are a recent development formed by analogy with nouns e.g.:

jaunùtis 'very young'

mažùtis 'tiny'

maželẽlis 'little, tiny'

dìdis 'big, large' dìdelis 'big, large + Dim'

In fact, dìdelis is much more common than dìdis, as Brender (1925:84) points out. mãžas 'small, little' can take a greater variety of suffixes than any other word in the language:[3] maželẽlis, mažilẽlis, mažùtis, mažýtis, mažiùkas, mažulẽlis, mažuliùkas, mažulýtis, mažylẽlis, mažiùlis, mažỹlis, mažučiùkas.

Brender (1925:83) calls this ability to take on a variety of different suffixes "Suffixvariation". Accummulation of suffixes is also possible in Lithuanian, albeit to a limited extent. In some cases, these examples have become so common that they have led to the creation of new, complex suffixes as was discussed earlier in this section. In other cases, degrees of diminutiveness have developed (cf. mãžas above).

In mergà, these have become lexicalised with a specialised meaning

e.g.: mergà > merginà > mergáitė

mergẽlė

('virgin')('girl')('girl, young girl, young woman' etc.)

(Brender 1925:91;109)

It was mentioned earlier that some suffixes show a preference for either feminine or masculine words. Yet other suffixes change the gender of the noun. Brender suspects some general connection between diminutive and gender (pp.93-94). This claim is investigated in 3.9.2.

From the examples given so far, most of the "diminutive domains" emerge quite clearly; kinship terms, hypocoristics, young animals, terms of endearment in the child's domain and the language of lovers

e.g.: rañkiščia, rankìkė 'little hand'

pirštùtis 'little finger'

Also, names of plants, animals, and environmental phenomena e.g.:

žibùtė 'violet' (Endzelīns 127)

dilgėlẽ 'nettle'

skruzdėlẽ 'ant' (Endzelīns 111)

upeliū́tė 'little river, brook' (Endzelīns 127)

Endzelīns (1971) lists quite a few examples of names of tools incorporating a diminutive suffix. In most cases, he classes the suffix under some of its non-diminutive uses e.g.: agentive use of -uk-; agentive or instrumental use of -ùtis/-ùtė. We have seen in many other languages, however, that diminutive suffixes are very frequently used to form names of tools and familiar objects, so we may well be dealing with the diminutive use of these suffixes in the following examples:

skambùtis	'little bell' (Endzelīns 127)
kratūka	'a small stick to shake tow'
švilpùkas	'whistle' (švīlpti 'to whistle')
kirstūkas	'chisel'

(Endzelīns 116)

puodìkas	'little pot'
staldìkas	'small stable'

(Endzelīns 115)

Some diminutives must be linked to the placating type e.g.:

vẽlnias	>	velniùkas	'the Devil'
		velnýkštis	
		velniū́kštis	
		velništis	
Dievas	>	Dievùtis	'God'

and the following, probably from an earlier religious period:

nėnùlis	'moon + Dim' (Brender 1925:95)
saulùžė	'the dear sun' (Brender 1925:98)

The example of ponùlis 'dear Sir', may be interpreted as an honorific or reverential diminutive.

Latvian

The most widely used diminutive suffixes in Latvian are -īt̨is(m)/ -īte (f), -iņš/-iņa, -ēns, -elis/-ele, -eņš/-eņa and -uks. Other suffixes are especially productive in regional dialects. Thus where Latvian borders on Slavic languages, in the east, -uška, -uškis and -iņks, -eņks may be found. In the south, where Latvian borders on Lithuanian, -elis and -ēlis are most frequently heard. In the north there seems to have been some influence from Estonian, as is borne out by the use of -ika, -iķis, -ene. Diminutives are most productive on nouns, which can take virtually any suffix, less so on adjectives, which form diminutives with -iņš, -ins, -īns, -eņš, -īt̨is, or the Slavic affixes -iņks and -eņks.
Other lexical categories can only form the occasional diminutive, with -iņš, -ins, -īns or -eņš. As in other languages the language spoken by and to children is richest in diminutives; so is the domain of the home in general, especially the language of women. The suffixes are often accompanied by a number of sound-changes which may be to some extent morphophonemic, as they seem to express some separate emotional content in the diminutive. (Rūķe-Draviņa 1959:175ff)

e.g. aka 'well' aciņa /atsiŋa/ 'little well'

The system is not always used, however and this inconsistency would suggest an optional symbolic function. This is especially true for the palatalisation processes found in the Tahmic dialects of Kurland, which accompany the suffix -iņš/-iņa (locally these take the form -îš or -iš).

e.g.	cũk	'pig'	čũčîš	'pig + Dim'
	ač	'eye'	ačîš	'eye + Dim'

Rūķe-Draviņa (1959:185) gives various possible phonetic explanations, but she concedes that "Die Erweichung des Konsonanten ist aber im Lettischen recht oft emotional bedingt, ..." This is supported by the fact that this process is quite often found in environments where we would not expect it and also by the fact that similar processes may be found in emotional speech even if no diminutives are used (Rūķe-Draviņa 1959:353). This type of emotional speech is primarily sarcastic, usually, although it may on occasion be endearing. The main criterion seems to be that there is some emotional load to be expressed.

Sorbian[1]

This language has a two-stage diminutive system consisting of a simple diminutive using suffixes and an intensified diminutive using an additional suffix placed between the stem and the simple diminutive suffix. The suffixes used for the simple diminutive are all varieties of the three basic suffixes; -k for masculine nouns, -ka for feminine nouns and -ko for neuter nouns. The other suffixes are on the whole phonologically conditioned allomorphs of these. In addition to suffixation, a change of the final consonant of the stem takes place, if this consonant is <g>, <k> or <ch>. These consonants become <ž>, <c> (/ts/) <š> respectively, i.e. they shift towards the palato-alveolar area.[2]

e.g.	nan	'father'	nank	'little father'
	koł	'rod'	kołk	'little rod'
	měch	'bag'	měšk	'little bag'

guba	'mouth'	gubka	'little mouth'
žaba	'frog'	žabka	'little frog'
ẃaža	'house'	ẃažka	'little house'
noga	'leg'	nožka	'little leg'
gole(t)	'child'	goletko	'little child'
postola	'bed'	postoletko	'little bed'
lěto	'year'	lětko	'short year'
jabłuko	'apple'	jabłucko	'little apple'

(Šẃela 1952:79)

Masculine nouns, that end in a palatalised[3] consonant, as well as <j> and <l>, take the suffixes -ik or -ašk.

e.g. koń	'horse'	konik	'little horse'
gołuḃ	'pi‿geon'	gołuḃašk	'little pi‿geon'
kij	'stick'	kijašk	'little stick'

Masculine nouns that end in a fricative or an affricate use the suffix -yk.

e.g. muž	'man'	mužyk	'little man'
golc	'boy'	golcyk	'little boy'

If the stem ends in a consonant cluster, the suffixes take the following forms; -ick for masculine, -icka for feminine and -icko for neuter nouns.

e.g. sotša	'sister'	sotśicka	'little sister'
ẃerchojstwo	'principality'	ẃerchojstwicko	'little principality'

(Šẃela 1952:79)

If a neuter noun ends in -dło or -sco, the <d> or <c> is deleted when the diminutive suffix is added.

e.g. glědadło	'mirror'	glědałko	'little mirror'
łožyšćo	'bed'	łožyško	'little bed'

Many nouns that end in a palatalised dental fricative, change that fricative into a stop with loss of palatalisation before the normal diminutive suffix.

e.g. seś 'net' setka 'little net'

gjarsć 'handful' gjarstka 'little handful'

(Šwela 1952:80)

The diminutive intensifier is formed by inserting -cy(c)- between the stem and the normal diminutive suffix, thus forming the following complex suffixes -cyk for masculine nouns, -cycka for feminine nouns and -cycko for neuter nouns e.g. człowek - człowešk - człowešcyk 'little fellow'

ruka - rucka - rucycka 'little hand'

luba - lubka - lubcycka 'lover'

woko - wocko - wocycko 'sweet little eye'

If the noun-stem ends in -eń, the intensifier takes the form -uš-.

e.g. kamień - kamušk 'little stone'

błoṁe(ń) - błomuško 'little lawn'

In addition to the above-mentioned diminutives, Sorbian also has augmentatives. These are formed by adding the suffix -isko/-ysko, which changes the gender to neuter. While the diminutives have connotations of endearment, sweetness etc., the augmentatives carry connotations of contempt.

e.g. kjarl 'fellow' kjarlisko 'objectionable fellow'

baba 'woman' babisko 'wicked female'

zwěŕe 'animal' zwěrisko 'vermin'

(Šwela 1952:80)

Czech

The use and forms of the diminutive in Czech are not unsimilar to those in Sorbian. They are used very frequently; as often as their non-diminutive counterparts in many cases.

> "The Czech language makes extensive use of so-called diminutives, derivative forms of nouns which show small size, endearment, or sometimes contempt." (Harkins 1953:237)

As in Sorbian, a number of different suffixes are used. Suffixation is often accompanied by palatalisation of the final consonant in the stem. The most common diminutive suffixes are -ek for masculine nouns, -ka for feminine nouns and -ko for neuter nouns.

e.g.	dům	'house'	domek	'small house'[4]
	kus	'piece'	kousek	'small piece'
	ruka	'hand'	ručka	'small hand'
	cibule	'onion'	cibulka	'small onion'

Many masculine nouns use the suffix -ík.

e.g.	nůž	'knife'	nožík	'small knife'
	koš	'basket'	košík	'small basket'

(examples from Lee & Lee 1959:144)

Czech too has an intensified diminutive which is formed by means of the suffix -eč-/-íč-, placed between the stem and the diminutive suffix; "often suggesting that the person or thing is very small, or expressing greater affection" (Lee & Lee 1959:145)

e.g.	kůň	'horse'	koníček	'small horse'
	dům		domeček	'very small house'
	kus		kousíček	'very small piece'
	ruka		ručička	'small hand'(e.g. of a watch)
	bába		babička	'grandmother'

(ibid)

A few diminutives end in the suffixes -át-/-áč-, -in-/-ín-, -uš/-ouš- placed between the stem and the diminutive suffix. These primarily express endearment.

e.g.	děvče	'girl'	děvčátko	'small girl'
	dcera	'daughter'	dceruška	'little daughter'
	syn	'son'	synáček	'little son'
	táta	'Dad'	tatínek	'Daddy'
	matka	'mother'	maminka	'mummy'
	děd	'old man'	dědeček	'grandfather'
			dědoušek	'grandfather'

(ibid)

Sometimes the diminutive form develops its own meaning.

e.g.	list	'leaf, sheet'	lístek	'ticket'[5]

(Harkins 1953:237)

Harkins (1953) also mentions what he calls "diminutives" of adjectives. These subtract as it were, some of the meaning of the original adjective. Or, as Lee & Lee put it (145), "... often denotes ... only a certain degree of the quality indicated, ...".

These use the suffix -avý, or the prefixes na- or při- and the suffix -lý.

e.g.	bílý	'white'	bělavý	'whitish'	(Harkins 1953:238)
	černý	'black'	černavý	'blackish, a bit black'	
			načernalý	'blackish, a bit black'	
	hloupý	'foolish'	přihlouplý	'a bit foolish'	

(Harkins 1953:239)

Augmentatives, which also exist in Czech are used much less frequently than diminutives. They use the suffixes -isko, -an, -ak, -ac or -oun.

e.g. hlupák 'a stupid chap'

břicháč 'a pot-bellied man' (from břicho 'belly')

psisko 'cur, ugly dog' (pes 'dog')

(Lee & Lee 1959:145)

Russian

> "Russians use a great number of diminutives in everyday speech. Their use often suggests, apart from considerations of size as such, some emotional attitude of the speaker towards the object or person he is addressing, describing, etc." (Frewin 1977:263)

This emotional attitude can range from affection on the one hand to contempt on the other, however as in most languages, the affectionate use of diminutives is far more common than its opposite. There are a large number of suffixes in Russian to express diminutive. Some of these can be combined to form an intensified diminutive. The suffixes can be divided into two major groups. Those including the consonant k, productive for masculine and feminine nouns and those including the consonant ц (/ts/), productive and most common for neuter nouns. (Townsend 1968:196). The following suffixes include k.

The masculine suffixes: -ok, -ik, -čik

-ok syn 'son' synók 'son' (dim)

drug 'friend' družók 'friend' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:196)

dom 'house' domók 'little house'

bog 'God' božok 'small idol'

(Lettenbauer 1933:3)

-ik nós 'nose' nósik 'nose' (dim)

stól 'table' stólik 'table' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:197)

-čik stakán 'glass' stakáńčik 'glass' (dim)

čyemodán 'suitcase' čyemodáńčik 'suitcase' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:197)

samováryets 'samovar' samovárčik

(Lettenbauer 1933:3)

The feminine suffix -ka and the neuter suffixes -ko and -iko.

e.g.: kómnata 'room' kómnatka 'room' (dim)

kníga 'book' knižka 'book' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:197)

kol'tsó 'ring' kolyéčko 'ring' (dim)

litsó 'face' ličiko 'face' (dim)

The following suffixes include -ts: neuter -tso with its variants -yetsó (stressed) and -itsyo (unstressed), both of these are used if the noun ends in a consonant cluster; masculine -yets and feminine -tsa/-itsa.

e.g. vino 'wine' vintsó 'wine' (dim)

platʹye 'dress' plat'itsye 'dress' (dim)

slóvo 'word' slovtsó 'word' (dim)

brát 'brother' brátyets 'brother' (dim)

material 'material' materialyets 'material' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:197)

dvyer' 'door' dvyértsa 'door' (dim)

vodá 'water' vodítsa 'water' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:198)

In the intensified diminutive[6] the affectionate connotations have taken over completely, at the expense of the notion of smallness. They are formed by complex suffixes consisting of a normal diminutive suffix with an additional suffix between it and the root.

e.g. -k- plus -ok družočyok 'friend' (dim affec)

-k- plus -ka knižyočka 'book' (dim affec)

-its plus -ka vodíčka 'water' (dim affec)

(ibid)

A number of complex suffixes are used to form simple diminutives:

e.g. -očk: lyénta 'tape' lyéntočka 'tape' (dim)

-yen'ka: máma 'mama' mamyen'ka 'mama' (dim)

-uška: koróva 'cow' koróvuška 'cow' (dim)

-uško: polye 'field' polyuško 'field' (dim)

-urka: doč' 'daughter' dočurka 'daughter' (dim)

-yško: górlo 'throat' górlyško 'throat' (dim)

(Townsend 1968:198)

Some suffixes are primarily derogatory, these are: -iška for feminine nouns and for masculine nouns denoting persons or animals; and -iško for neuters and masculine nouns denoting inanimate objects.

e.g. kvartíra 'apartment' kvartíriška 'apartment'(dim pej)

zyemlyá 'land' zyemlíška 'land' (dim pej)

górod 'city' gorodíško 'city' (dim pej)

The suffix -yonka also has derogatory connotations.

e.g. izbá 'hut' izbyonka 'hut' (dim pej)

lóšad' 'horse' lošadyonka 'horse' (dim pej)

(Townsend 1968:199)

Hypocoristics are extensively used in Russian. They use many of the diminutive suffixes mentioned above, plus some additional ones often added to the shortened root.

e.g. (ibid) Aleksandr - Sašča

Mariya - Mašča

Tat'yana - Tanya

As can be seen from the above examples, many masculine names use a feminine suffix. This phenomenon is very widespread in Russian hypocoristics. Lettenbauer (1933:9) explains it as follows:

> "Der Russe spricht von den ihm nahestehenden männlichen Wesen in der zarteren, liebenswürdigeren Form des weiblichen Deminutivums. Die meisten Dem. der männlichen Rufnamen haben weibliche Form"

e.g. Dimitrij - Mitya
- Mit'ka
- Mitryuška
- Mityen'ka

Iván - Ványa
- Vanyečka
- Van'ka

Frewin (1977:367) too gives a long list of similar examples. Many kinship terms have similar forms derived from them.

e.g. bat'ka 'little father'
batyuška 'little father'
dyad'ka 'little uncle'
dyadyenka 'little uncle'
dyadyečka 'little uncle'
dyadyuška 'little uncle'

(Lettenbauer 1933:9)

Based on this a number of other nouns, used affectionately in the home environment have adopted similar derivations.

e.g. mal'čijška 'little boy' (from mal'čik 'boy')

As in many other languages we have discussed, Russian has a number of diminutives which have lost their diminutive force. This may happen if it replaces the word from which it was originally derived.

e.g. dyévuška 'girl' < dyéva 'maiden, girl' (now poetic only)

(Townsend 1968:199)

glotók 'draught, swig' (of drink') < glot (now very rare)

byélka 'squirrel' < byéla (now extinct)

(Lettenbauer 1933:8)

It may also happen if they take on a new, specialised meaning.

e.g. čaša 'goblet' čaška 'cup' (Townsend 1968:200)

Lettenbauer (1933:10-12) gives a long list of examples, which incidentally also show the domains in which diminutives most frequently occur e.g. - personal names and kinship terms:

bába 'woman' bábka, babuška 'grandmother'

- animal names:

bábočka 'butterfly' (origin as above)

matka 'female of any animal; queen bee'

pyos 'dog' pyesyets 'polar fox'

- plant names:

vasilyok 'cornflower' from Vasilij 'Basil'

volčyets 'thistle' from volk 'wolf'

- body-parts of people and animals:

us 'whisker' úsik 'antennae of insect'

- tools, familiar objects:

kontorka 'desk' from kontóra 'office' (Lettenbauer, 33)

nosok 'nozzle of vessel, jug' < nos 'nose'

pyetušok 'weather-cock' < pyetux 'cock'

Lettenbauer (1933:17) gives some examples of words, which have taken on a new meaning, but which are still somehow related to the meaning of the base form. e.g. vodka 'wodka' voda 'water'

karta 'card, map' kartočka 'ticket'

Many diminutives are used so frequently that they have become interchangeable with the noun from which they were originally derived.

e.g. lisa 'fox'

lisjtsa (?) 'fox'

molot 'hammer'

molotok 'hammer'

Adjectives

Many adjectives, especially those denoting a quality, can form diminutives in Russian. It "... conveys diminution and, usually, an affectionate attitude on the part of the speaker toward the noun modified by the adjective". (Townsend 1968:237). They use the suffix -yen'k or -on'k-; the latter after velars.

e.g.	milyj	'nice, dear'	milyen'kij	'nice, dear' (dim)
	žyoltyj	'foolish'	žyoltyen'kij	'yellow' (dim)[8]
	glupyj	'foolish'	glupyen'kij	'foolish' (dim)

Lettenbauer (1933:5) points out that the meaning of an adjective can be strengthened or weakened by the diminutive suffix. In this way, xorošyen'kij 'pretty' meant in fact 'very pretty' rather than only 'a little bit pretty'. This is one of two very common adjectives, whose diminutive force has been lost. As a result they have become virtually interchangeable with their non-dim. forms:

malyj	'small'	malyen'kij	'small'
xoroš	'good-looking'	xorošen'kij	'good-looking'

(Townsend 1968:237)

Finally, Lettenbauer (1933:5) gives a few examples of diminutive adverbs. These are rare, however.

e.g. tiškom 'softly, silently'[9] (tixij 'silent')

bosikom 'barefoot'

malyenyečko 'a little'

Basque

Basque[1] uses two quite different methods for the formation of its diminutives. The first of these is by means of suffixes. There are a large number of suffixes which may have some diminutive sense in Basque. Haize Garbia mention 18 of them: -anda, -ka, -kanda, -kara, -ko, -lla, -ñi, -ño, -ska, -sko, -sta, -tila, -tto,[2] -txa,[3] -txi, -txo, -xko, -xo. Many of these are forms of the same suffix. Some suffixes are more common than others and their use also varies from one dialect to another. Arotçarena (1976:15) lists the following: -ail, -aire, -kara, -anda, -sko, -tcha,[4] -tto, -che, -tsu. e.g. oilanda 'fattened pullet'

haurtto 'little child'

On page 142 he then goes on to say that -ño, -tto, -cho are the most common suffixes for nouns and adjectives:

lore	'flower'	loreño, loretto	
haur	'child'	haurtto, haurtcho	

According to López Mendizábal (1943:69), who writes primarily about the Spanish dialects, -txo (Gipuzkoa dialect) or -txu (Bizkaya dialect) is the most common suffix e.g. Nere amatxo maitea 'my beloved mother + Dim'. Estornes Lasa (1967:50) gives an example with -ño:

zaldi	'horse'	zaldiño	'little horse'

While Herero Tornadijo (p.148) gives us:

etxe	'house'	etxetxoa	'little house'

using the -txo(a) suffix.

Clearly there are a lot of dialect differences involved.

Diminutive suffixes can also be added to adjectives: horail 'yellowish' to pronouns: nortsu à peu près qui, and to demonstratives: hauxe 'this + Dim' (used before a noun) (Arotçarena 1976:15).

Arotçarena (142) explains that for demonstratives, interrogatives and comparatives -(t)che is the suffix used e.g.:

nun	'where'	nuntche	'where exactly?'

For adverbs and numerals -tsu is used e.g.:

erdi	'half'	erditsu	'almost half'

Hypocoristics are also formed with diminutive suffixes. In addition there are a few specialised hypocoristic suffixes, notably -to.

López Mendizábal (1943:69) gives:

Xabiertxo

Mirentxu

Estornes Lasa (1967:50-51) has quite a few examples:

Juan - Juanko, Juango, Juanto, Juantho

Mikel - Mikelto

Martin - Martinto, Martintxo

Eneko - Enekot, Enecotx

He also gives a few examples of double suffixes used to achieve greater endearment: Juan-txu-to, Juan-iko-t

Consonant symbolism

The second method used in Basque to form diminutives is consonant symbolism and in the use of this method Basque is unique in Europe. Essentially consonants in the base form are palatalised.[5] The

number and extent depending on the degree of diminution intended by the speaker.

e.g.: zakur 'dog' /s/
↓
xakur 'little dog' /ʃ/ /k/
↓
ttattur 'very little dog' /tj/ /tj/

There appears to be a hierarchy of susceptibility to this treatment. Fricatives are the most likely to be palatalised; stops are next. In addition, initial consonants are palatalised first, followed by medial consonants. Anderson (pers.comm.) proposes the following diagram to show these hierarchies:

	Fricative	Stop
Initial	1	2
Medial	2	3

Tovar (1957:100) also discusses this phenomenon briefly and he explains that it is not used in the western dialects. He gives the following examples from Zuberoa (easternmost dialect).

adar	'a horn'	aďar	'the devil'
nabar	'brown'	ñabar	'variegated'
Pero	'Peter'	Pello	'little Peter' /ʎ/

Estornes Lasa (1967:79-80) discusses Basque consonant symbolism in general and he gives the diminutive example: zip- 'small' txip 'tiny'. Arotçarena (1976:142) also mentions this method: "Si le mot contient des lettres susceptibles de mouillure, il suffit pour en obtenir le diminutif de mouiller ces lettres."

e.g. mando 'mule' manddo 'little mule'

Pejoratives

A number of specialised diminutive suffixes is used in Basque. These are usually called pejoratives, but they do have a diminutive sense as well. Haize Garbia mention -ska, -skil, -xka, and -xila in this context. Arotçarena lists the same suffixes and gives the following examples:

jaunchka bat	'a little man (pej)'
haurchkila bat	'a naughty child'

Augmentatives

Finally we should briefly mention augmentatives because of the way they interrelate with diminutives. An augmentative sense is achieved by reversing diminutive consonant symbolism. This can be extended to the suffixes too, where a diminutive suffix without the palatal can be used as an augmentative suffix.

e.g. buru	'head'		
burutto	'little head'	/tj/	
		v	
buruto	'big head'	/t/	

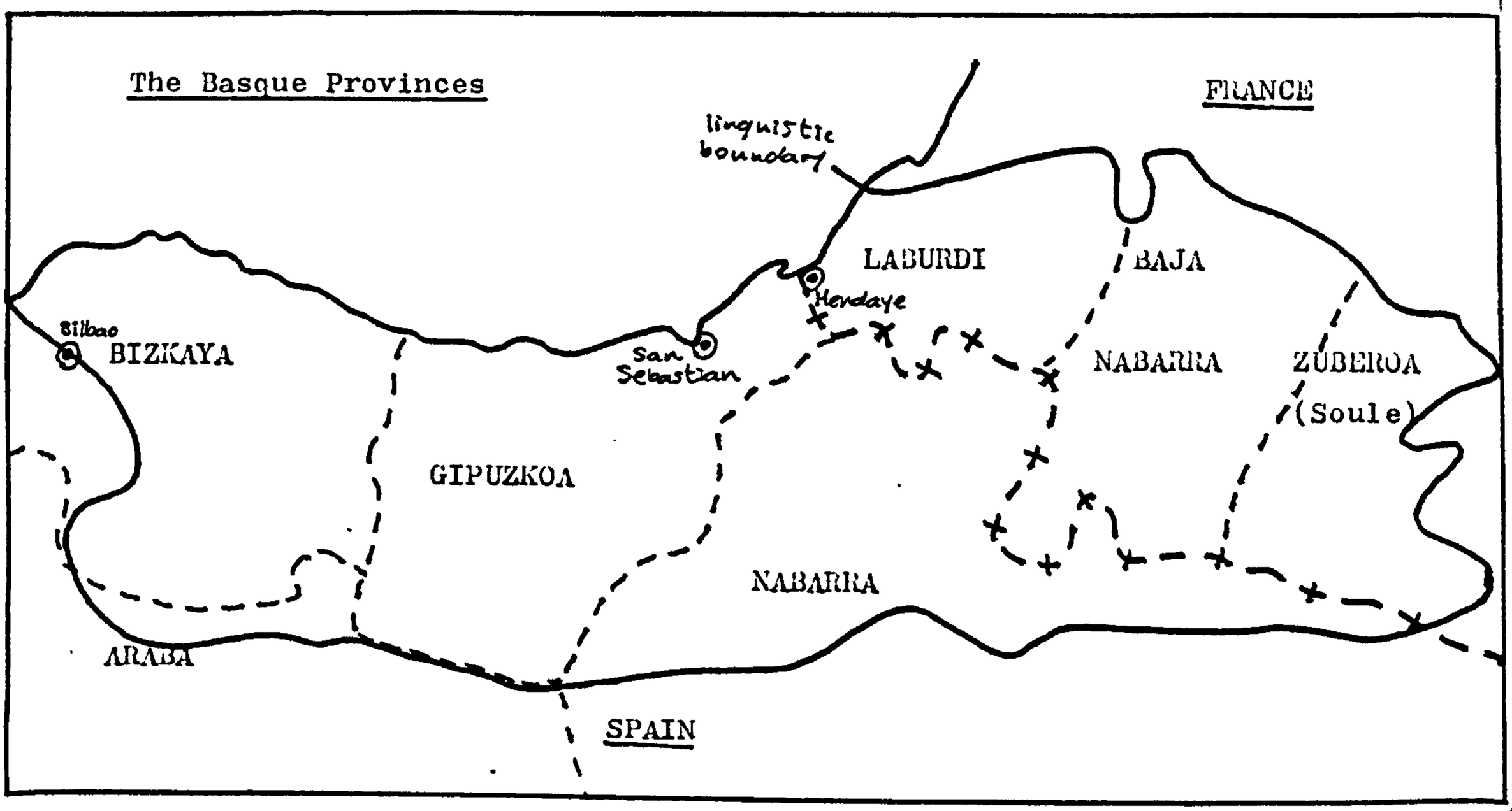
Hypocoristics can be similarly treated e.g. Mañaña 'little Marianne', Manana 'big Marianne'. Not every diminutive has a corresponding augmentative form. Estornes Lasa (1967:80) gives the following: txirbil 'shaving' (of wood etc.), but: *zirbil. In addition Tovar (1957:100) mentions two specific augmentative suffixes:

-kote and -tzar (< zarra 'old').

Semantics

The meaning of diminutives in Basque is no different from those in most other languages i.e. they are used for affection as well as referring to small size. This holds for both types of diminutive

formation. The pejorative sense of diminutives is covered by the specialised pejorative suffixes. Augmentatives seem to express admiration rather than size or any negative emotions. Diminutives are used frequently in Basque; augmentatives are much rarer, as in every language that uses them.[6]



Hungarian

Hungarian uses a large number of diminutive suffixes with various degrees of productivity. Diminutives have connotations other than smallness and many can be used mockingly (Tompa 1968:129). Probably because of their number, a certain amount of specialisation has taken place. This is best illustrated by discussing each suffix or group of suffixes separately. In many cases the suffixes are attached to a shortened form of the stem. The following

suffixes are used on nouns.

-cske/-cska This is the most common suffix. Its meaning is primarily objective (i.e. referring to smallness) although it can also have affective connotations. It can be attached to all nouns.

e.g.	csillag	'a star'	csillagocska	'starlet, asterisk'
	felhő	'cloud'	felhőcske	'little cloud, cloudlet'

(Bánhidi et al. 1965:421)

valami	'something'	valamicske	'a little, a bit'
kő	'stone'	kövecske	'little stone, pebble'
fiú	'boy, son'	fiúcska	'little boy, little son'
ház	'house'	házacska	'little house'

(Tompa 1968:129)

-ke/-ka Is also a very common suffix used on bisyllabic words, in <r, l, n, ny, s, i, o, ő>

e.g.	leány	'girl'	leányka	'little girl'
	ember	'man, person, people'	emberke	'little fellow'

(Bánhidi et al. 1965:421)

kenyér	'bread'	kenyérke	'little piece or a small loaf of bread'

This suffix is often used to form names of tools, items of clothing or plant-names.

e.g.	otthon	'home, at home'	otthonka	'small rug for the home'
	esti	'evening'	estike	'night-voilet'

(Tompa 129)

-ke/-ika A still productive suffix, albeit rare. Used mainly with childish connotations.

e.g.	has	'belly'	hasika	'little belly'
	csésze	'bowl, cup, etc.	csészike	'little bowl, cup etc'

These suffixes, as well as a number of others, are also used to form hypocoristics or affective forms of kinship terms, etc.

-cske/-cska

e.g. Anná - Annácska[1]

magácska 'you little darling'

-ke/-ka This suffix forms hypocoristics mainly from christian names and affective forms of kinship terms.

e.g. Teréz - Terézke

József - Jóska

néni 'aunt' nénike 'little aunt, little mother'

-i Is a very common hypocoristic suffix.

e.g. Árpád - Árpi

József - Józsi

Éva - Évi

(Tompa 1968:129)

This suffix has childish connotations in Standard Hungarian, however in certain urban dialects and adolescent peer-group speech it is quite productive, even for diminutives from nouns, where the suffix follows a shortened stem.

e.g. cigaretta cigi 'cigarette-dim'

csokoládé csoki 'chocolate-dim'

(Bánhidi et al. 1965:421)

fagyalt 'ice-cream' fagyi 'ice-cream-Dim'

óvoda 'nursery-school óvi, ovi 'nursery-school-Dim'

(Tompa 1968:130)

-csi This is also frequently used for hypocoristics.

e.g. János - Jancsi

Teréz - Tercsi

Like -i, -csi is also used for normal diminutives in certain types of colloquial speech.

e.g. forint (Hungarian currency) fronsci

pulóver pulcsi

(ibid)

-ci Now fairly rare, used mainly for hypocoristics but also for kinship terms.

e.g.	Albert	-	Berci	
	Bertalan	-	Berci	
	Judit	-	Juci	
	apa	'father'	apuci	'daddy'

-ike/-ika

e.g.	Teréz	-	Terike	
	Pál	-	Palika	

-us Is only rarely productive nowadays, but still used for hypocoristics, kinship terms and sometimes for domestic animals.

e.g.	Anna	-	Annus	
	Imre	-	Imrus	
	apa	-	apus	
	kutya	'dog'	kutyus	'little dog, doggie'

(Tompa 1968:130)

In addition to those mentioned so far, there are a few more suffixes, now virtually non-productive, some of which appear in the examples below. It has already become clear that some of these hypocoristics and kinship terms can be formed with several different suffixes. In many cases the choice is considerable.

e.g. István - Istvánka, Isti, Istók, Pista, Pisti, Pistike.

Ilona - Ilonka, Ilka, Ili, Ilike, Ilus, Ila, Ica, Icu, Icuka.

anya 'mother' - anyu, anyuka, anyus, anyuskа.

(Bánhidi et al. 1965:422)

Many of these are in fact multiple diminutives, combining several different suffixes.

Adjectives, numerals, verbs

Many of these can also form diminutives. Adjectives and numerals by means of the suffixes -cske/-cska and -ke/-ka.

e.g.	nagy	'big, large'	nagyocska	'fairly large'
	kicsi	'little, small'	kicsike	'very little, tiny'

(Bánhidi et al. 1965:422)

butácska	'a little bit stupid'	
csekélyke	'a little' (adj)	
kettes	'two'	kettecskén 'together, the two of us/you/them'

(Tompa 1968:129)

These forms have certain affective or mocking connotations.

A verbal diminutive in Hungarian expresses repeated interruption or small movement. The suffix -(e)de [ɐ] z(ik)/-dözik/-(a)doz(ik) is used. It is only productive with a small number of verbs, many without -ik.

e.g. rémüldözik 'to be frightened, gripped by terror'

ájuldozik 'to keep fainting'

(Tompa 1968:110-111)

There are a few other formations in Hungarian which can express a diminutive sense of some sort. One of these is what Tompa (1968:140) calls "unechte Zwillingswörter", a type of semi-reduplication involving two stems which are similar but not the same. They express partly an intensification of meaning and partly a diminution.

e.g. fűr-farag[2] 'tinkered, rigged up' (with connotations of depreciation)

Jespersen (1933:294) refers to yet another type of diminutive formation in Hungarian: "There is also in Magyar a curious way of making words diminutive by changing their vowel to /i/: madárka 'bird' - madirka 'little birdie'".[3] Neither Tompa (1968) nor Bánhidi, Jókay and Szabó (1965) mention these forms however.

Lappish[4]

In Lappish, diminutives are formed from nouns or adjectives by means of the following suffixes: -š (genitive -ža) for so-called class I words, often accompanied by a vowel shift and also used for class III words; -(a)š (gen. (a)žža) for class II words.

Diminutives thus produced are used for:

- small size or degree of nouns and adjectives.
- ingratiating, charming, coaxing address.
- expressions of pleasure, enjoyment.

(Bergsland 1961:88)

e.g. nouns jågaš 'little river, burn'

áččážan 'dear father!'

us'tibaž'žan 'dear friend!'

duppáhaš lævalljis 'fortunately there is still enough tobacco+Dim'

Adjectives

viššalaš gal livčii dat hæs'ta, mutta gå læ nu væi'ki

'the horse is willing-Dim enough, but it is so weak'

buorebuš dušši 'little better than nothing'

The synthetic diminutive is often accompanied by an analytic diminutive using the adjective ucca/unna 'small, little'

e.g. ucca gábmagaš 'a little kommag' (a boot of reindeerhide worn by Lapps)

ucca båluš 'a little short/scanty'

(ibid)

The verbal diminutive in Lappish is formed by the suffix -sti-t, often added to a truncated stem for class I or III verbs; the suffixes -(æ)s'ti-t or -(a)s'ti-t on class II verbs, as well as -s'ti-t on a truncated stem in -u- of verbs in -uvva-t. The verbal diminutives have the following meanings (Bergsland 1961:81)

- 'a short while', 'just once', 'quickly' or 'of short duration', or added to certain shortened verbs it means 'suddenly'.
- on verbs in the imperative it often means 'please' or'be so good as to'
- on some verbs the diminutive expresses the sense of 'begin to..' or 'suddenly begin to..'
- on verbs without a shortened stem it has boastful or mocking, pejorative connotations. It can have the force of an intensifier, also possibly intensifying any diminutive sense.

e.g. ii læet buorránaes'tan ii væhá ge 'he has not improved+Dim in the least'

addes munnje čázi 'be so good as to give me water'

ái'go gal fas bieggastit ija vuollái 'there will be another storm starting to blow+Dim before tonight'

dat láve addistit dåv'dun lákkái 'he usually gives+Dim for motives of profit'

Semitic

Three semitic languages have been selected to serve as examples in this section; Arabic, Maltese, and Tigrē, one of the Ethiopic languages,[1] which show great variations in their diminutive systems.

Arabic

In Syrian Arabic, according to Cowell (1964:310), diminutives are not only non-productive, but relatively rare; although the Lebanese dialect uses more diminutives than that of Damascus. Diminutives are formed by infixing -ayy(e)-.

e.g.	ẓġīr	'child, young one'	ẓġayyer	'little one'
	ṣabi	'boy'	ṣbayy	'little boy'
	ʔəbˁn	'son'	bnayy(-i)	'(my) little son'
	bənt	'daughter, girl'	bnayye	'little daughter, little girl'
	šī	'thing, something, some'	šwayy(e)	'a little'

In Lebanon, the following special diminutives are also used; in preference to their non-diminutive counterparts:

bayy	'father'
xayy	'brother'
xayye	'sister'
dayye	'hand'
žrayye	'foot'
dayne	'ear'

(examples from Cowell 1964:310)

Most, if not all of these seem to belong to the home environment and have affectionate connotations. The same is perhaps true for the example mentioned by Kramers (1949:119):

abdun	'slave'	abajdun	'little slave'

Kramers also mentions Syrian derivations in -ôn and -ôs with a diminutive sense, although he gives no examples. Cowell, however, gives a few examples of marginal diminutives involving an -ū- infix of some sort:

nətfe	'a little bit'	nattūfe	'a tiny bit'
lə?me	'a bite, mouthful'	la??ūme	'a little bite, little mouthful'

These may be related to the hypocoristics mentioned below. Some Syrian dialects, especially Lebanese also employ a number of hypocoristics derived from common names by means of a subtraction or modification process:

e.g. ʕabdalla, etc.	-	ʕabbūd, ʕabbūde
lətfalla	-	laṭṭūf
?aḥmad	-	ḥammūd
maryam	-	marrūm

In Egypt diminutives are used mainly for hypocoristics; except in such words as:

ẓuġaiyar	'small, little'
quṣaiyar	'short'
kuwaiyis	'beautiful' etc. (Littmann 1943:89)

Another type of hypocoristic formation in Egyptian Arabic is mentioned in Cantineau (1946)[2] and involves partial reduplication.

e.g. Fāṭima	-	Faṭamṭam
Ḫalīma	-	Ḫalamlam

These Arabic diminutives are very much primarily affecticnate as is shown by the domains in which they survive. This is apparently also true for written (i.e. Classical) Arabic as Tritton (1943:182) mentions. Littmann (1943:100) lists a few examples of diminutive demonstratives in Arabic e.g. hāḏē(a) 'this, that, this one, that one' hāḏōntā. Finally, Leslau (1945:278) reports on a lexicalised verbal

diminutive, particularly in the Southern Arabic dialects. He lists the following examples from the Ulad Brahîm de Saïda, in the dialect of Oran:

tqeɨbbōḥ	'to become a bit naughty'	
ṭṭeɨllob	'to be a mediocre taleb'	
t'ê̞ɨrba	'to become a little "arabised"'	

In the modern dialects similar forms survive, as in Soqotri:

'ar'er	-	'are'ir	'produce a sound'
riḥeḍ	-	reḥayaḍ	'wash'
qeriḍ	-	qerayaḍ	'cut hair'

These forms all use the -ay- infix to express their diminutive forms.[3]

Soqotri also has a verbal diminutive in -en. Examples of this type are:

beteq	-	btaqohen	'to walk with little steps'
ṣo'eher	-	ṣa'arhen	'to sob'

(Leslau 1945:278)

These forms are not productive in the modern dialects, as Leslau points out (280). He traces back their origin to the nominal diminutive marker -ay-, which was mentioned at the beginning of this section.

Maltese

Maltese can form diminutives from nouns and adjectives. In addition to referring to smallness they have certain emotional connotations, especially of 'grace' (Aquilina 1965:62). In modern Maltese, the diminutive is no longer productive and has become restricted to a well-defined group of nouns and adjectives. Diminutives are formed by infixing -ajja-, -ajje-, ejja-, or -ejje- between the second and third radicals of a word. The feminine forms are marked by an

-a suffix, which leads to the omission of the second (unstressed) syllable of the diminutive infix, to conform to Maltese stress rules.

e.g.	ħmar	'donkey'	ħmajjar	'a little donkey'
	ħmara	'she-ass'	ħmajra	'a little donkey'
	tifel	'boy'	tfajjel	'a young man'
	tifla	'girl'	tfajla	'a young woman' (affectionate)
	ġnien	'garden'	ġnejna	'a little garden'
	dar	'house'	dwejra	'cottage'

adjectives:

fqir	'poor'	fqajjar	'rather poor' (connotations of sympathy)
fqira	'poor'	fqajra	'rather poor' "
ismar / samra	'brown'	smajjar / smajra	'brownish'
sabiħ / sabiħa	'fine'	sbejjaħ / sbejħa	'rather fine' (connotations of sympathy)
xiħ / xiħa	'old'	xwejjaħ / xwejħa	'old' with affectionate connotations

There are a few words, which form diminutives by suffixing -a.

e.g.	but	'pocket'	buta	'a small pocket'
	forn	'oven'	forna	'a small oven'

(all examples from Aquilina 1965:62-63)

The diminutives with -a suffix all seem to refer to size only without any emotional connotations. They also seem to be mainly Romance loans, which were perhaps unsuitable for diminution by infix in the Arabic manner.

Tigrē

Tigrē has developed the richest and most varied diminutive system in Semitic, including double, triple and quadruple diminutives (Littmann 1943:89).

e.g. walat 'girl'

walētat 'girl' + Dim

walatīt 'girl' + Dim

walētatīt 'girl + Dim + Dim

walētētatīt 'girl + Dim + Dim + Dim

walētētētatīt 'girl' + Dim + Dim +Dim + Dim[4]

(Littmann 1943:90)

As in Arabic, the most fertile ground for diminutives is that of hypocorism, which Littmann (ibid) believes is the origin of diminutives in general.[5] For masculine diminutives and hypocoristics, the suffixes used are -āy, -tāy, -etāy, often in addition to some sound change in the root, such as doubling of consonants and replacement of the vowel in the final syllable (in closed syllables) by ē or e (represents [ə]). For feminine forms, the following suffixes are used: -at, -īt, -tat, -tīt, -atīt, -ētat, -tatīt. Here too some changes in the root may accompany suffixation. Often the base form is itself already a diminutive form or a shortened form of a compound name.

Examples

-āi̯ This is a very common suffix, used mainly after closed final syllables incorporating an e, i, o, or u.

e.g. Hebtēs - Hebtēsāi̯

Ṭabīb - Ṭabībāi̯

Maḥamūd - Maḥamūdāi̯

-āi̯+double consonant; this formation is very rare, but Littmann has found a few examples.

e.g. Lēmān - Lēmennāi̯

Ḥasan - Ḥassēnāi̯

(note that these also involve a vowel change)

-āi̯ with vowel change to ē. This is a very common formation, used mainly after a closed final syllable including an ā or a.

e.g. Hemār - Hemērāi̯

Maḥammad - Maḥammēdāi̯

'Abrehām - 'Abrehēmāi̯

-tai this suffix is used after a final e, i, o, u, or sometimes -oi.

e.g. Ḥamdē - Ḥamdētāi̯

Kullū - Kullūtāi̯

'Andalōi̯ - 'Andalōtāi̯

-ētāi̯ this is the second most common form of the suffix, after -āi̯. It is often used with names that end in -āi̯ already, thus forming double diminutives.

e.g. Hebtāi̯ - Hebtētāi̯

Šēkāi̯ - Šēkētāi̯

also used with all names in -ā:

Īsā - Īsētāi̯

Mūsā - Mūsētāi̯

Sālem - Sālmētāi̯

Nāser - Nāsrētāi̯

Finally, this is the suffix used on double diminutives, to form triple diminutives:

Kabāšāi̯ - Kabēšētāi̯

-at the most common feminine diminutive suffix; used after closed syllables mainly.

e.g. Sannēt - Sannētat

Gaddīt - Gaddītat

-at with a change to ē in the final syllable.

e.g. 'Arafāt - 'Arafētat

Settal - Settēlat

-īt used after -at or -t. When the final syllable is -it, it is followed by -at or -atīt as suffix. Often used to form double diminutives.

e.g. Mālkat - Mālkatīt

Çermet - Çermetīt

-tat is used after long vowels -ī, -ō and -ū.

e.g. 'Elēnī - 'Elēnītat

Gebrū - Gebrūtat

Dakanō - Dakanōtat

-tīt this suffix is used after -ā.

e.g. Madīnā - Madīnatīt

Delā - Delatīt

-atīt with double consonant and/or -e in the final syllable.[6]

e.g. Hēkal - Hēkellatīt

Ǧēnab - Ǧēnebbatīt

Settal - Settēlatīt

There are also a few names, which end in -ā and which use the suffix -ētat.[7]

e.g. Malkā - Malkētat

Finally, Littmann has found 2 examples of the triple diminutive with names:

Mallēlū	-	Mallēlūtatīt
Nadalē	-	Nadalētatīt

(all examples from Littmann 1943:92-97)

Nouns

With the nouns, an even greater variety of diminutives is possible. The same suffixes are used as for hypocoristics and most nouns allow double diminutives. Doubling of consonants and vowel mutation are even more frequent than with names.

Examples

bēt 'house' (m/f)	bētāị
	bētētāị
	bētat
	bētētat
	bētatīt
šūm 'chief' (m)	šūmāị
	šūmētāị
ḫarmāz 'elephant' (m)	ḫarmēzāị
	ḫarmēzētāị
ḫallū 'large red ant' (f)	ḫallūtat
	ḫallūtatIt
	ḫallūtētat

As in many other languages, kinship terms are frequently diminutivised.

e.g. 'ab	'father'	'abūtāị
'emm	'mother'	'emmētat
		'emmatīt

Adjectives, verbs, pronouns

A small number of adjectives, verbs and pronouns are known to form diminutives.

e.g. ne'uš	'small, little' (m)	ne'ūšāį	
		ne'usetai	
ne'īš	'small, little' (f)	ne'īšat	
		ne'īšatīt	
		ne'īšētat	

There is also the form ne'išatō 'a little', in which a rare diminutive -ō suffix is used. There are a few instances of this suffix, notably:

ḫenkatō 'very small, a very small amount'

bētbēttō 'a very small little house'

Certain verbs were also given by Littmann's informants as examples of diminutives.

e.g. ḫarārasa 'to plow a little here and there'

kadādama 'to do an occasional day's work'

A number of nouns are derived from verbs by means of the suffix -āį. Whether these should be described as diminutives is doubtful, though.

e.g. ramqa	'to request'	rēmqāį	'beggar'
sarqa	'to steal'	sērqāį	'highwayman'

Finally, there are a few pronouns, which have diminutive forms derived from them.

e.g. 'éllī	'this' (m)	'ellītāį	
'éllā	'this' (f)	'ellatīt	
		'ellētat	
lṓhaį	'that' (m)	lōhētāį	
lṓhā	'that' (f)	lōhatīt	(Littmann, ibid, 100)

It would seem that only demonstratives form diminutives in this way.

As in Arabic, all these forms are primarily affective rather than denoting smallness. In fact the bias towards the emotional is even more pronounced in Semitic than in the European languages (other than Maltese of course). Unlike Arabic, Tigrẽ has a fully productive diminutive system (with the possible exception of the -õ suffix), although Littmann (103) does mention the fact that in Sudanese Arabic the diminutives are very popular even today and Palestinian too seems to use them more productively than the standard dialects.

Bantu

In the Bantu languages, every noun is a member of one of 23 noun-classes which can be compared with the Indo-European genders. Each of these classes has its own prefix. Not every language uses all 23 classes and the class prefix which a noun in any one class takes does not have the same form in each language. In most Bantu languages a diminutive sense is expressed by moving a noun as it were into a specific noun-class. Diminutive plurals move into another specified class and take the prefix of that class. The normal members of these classes are all nouns which refer to small objects. The specific classes used in this way for diminutives are not the same in each language. To illustrate the system I will first give a survey of diminutives in Swahili and a number of other languages which follow its basic principles. After this I will give brief accounts of a few Bantu languages that somehow differ from this "basic" system.

Swahili

In Swahili, diminutives may be formed by transferring words of any class into the KI- (7th prefix) and for plurals into the VI- (8th prefix) class. If a noun has no prefix, its diminutive is formed by simply adding the prefix KI-. If it already has a prefix, that prefix is replaced by KI-, or by VI- in the plural. Diminutives thus formed can be either with or without derogatory connotations, depending on context. The rule in its basic form is used by disyllabic and polysyllabic nouns.

e.g. mtoto	'child'	kitoto	'infant'	vitoto	'infants'
mjakazi	'female slave'	kijakazi	'girl slave'	vijakazi	plu
mlima	'mountain'	kilima	'hill'	vilima	'hills'
njia	'road, path'	kijia	'narrow path'	vijia	plu
uvuli	'shade'	kivuli	'shadow'	vivuli	'shadows'
ndugu	'brother'	kidugu	'little brother'		
jicho	'eye'	kijicho	'little eye'; 'shy, envious glance', with negative connotations.		

(last two examples from Loogman 1965:33; other examples from Ashton 1944:296)

If the root is monosyllabic, or begins with a vowel, -J(I)- is inserted between the KI-/VI- prefix and the root.

e.g. mtu	'person'	kijitu	'dwarf'	vijitu	plu
mji	'town'	kijiji	'hamlet'	vijiji	plu
mto	'river'	kijito	'streamlet'	vijito	plu

If the same -JI- prefix is inserted in front of disyllabic roots, it itensifies the diminutive sense, usually with derogatory connotations.

e.g. mtoto	'child'	Kijitoto	'a very small infant'
mbuzi	'goat'	kijibuzi	'a poor specimen of a goat'

examples:

Basi wale ndugu zake wakatumia sehemu ya mali yao wakajiwekea viduka.	'So his brothers used a portion of their wealth and set up small shops for themselves.
Wakaona mali zao zote si kitu, wakaocha vijiduka vyao waka-hama.	And they saw their wealth become as nothing again, they left their good-for-nothing shops (-DIM-JI) and moved elsewhere,'
Ala Bwana ! Mbona unajiandalia pekeyo ! hunibakishii hata kijikiroma kimoja?	'Sir! Why are you putting them (coconuts aside for yourself only! Aren't you leaving even one poor unripe coconut for me?'

(examples from Ashton 1944:296)

It was already explained in 4.4 that these prefixes are not primarily diminutive, unlike diminutive suffixes in many European languages, which express nothing else. In the case of Bantu prefixes many other meanings may be associated with them. For example in Swahili, KI- also appears in words which refer to something belonging to a certain group, such as their behaviour, manners, habits, dress, or language, e.g.

Kiswahili 'Swahili language, manner, dress, etc.'

Kiunguja 'the same but from Zanzibar'

As well as this, the prefix has a number of other uses.

Fernandian

The class 7 prefix to express diminutive singular is also used in Fernandian, but here it takes the form si- or s- as is illustrated

by the following examples (from Bleek 1971:248):

sinodi	'a small bird'
siso	'a small fire' (from boso 'fire')
sipa	'a small ring', 'a small amulet' (from epa 'an armlet')
sinki	'a small fly'
soto	'a small bag'
setshi	'gazelle'

The plural uses the class 12 prefix; which takes the forms to-, tw-, and t- in Fernandian, e.g.

tonodi	'small birds'
toinki	'small flies'
toto	'small bags'
twetshi	'gazelles'

Kongo

Kongo also uses the class 7 prefix for diminutives, but in addition it reduplicates the root. Kongo is exceptional in relation to its neighbours in both respects, as Bleek (1971:125) points out:

> "..., whilst in the three other genera of the Middle Branch the prefix KA- of the 13th class is used for the purpose of forming diminutives, it appears not to have this force in the North-West genus ... Curiously enough, diminutives are formed in this language with the prefix of the 7th class KI-, joined to a reduplication of the stem."

Bleek gives the following examples:

mũana	'son, child'	kimũanamũãna	'a little child'
mũleke	'a boy'	kilekeleke	'a little boy'

Plural forms take the prefix i- in addition to reduplication: e.g. ilekeleke 'little boys'

It was already indicated by Bleek that most of the so-called Middle Branch languages use the class 13 (KA-) prefix for diminutive singular, usually in conjunction with either the class 12 (TU-) or in some languages the class 14 (BU-) prefix for plurals.

Lumasaaba

This language expresses diminutives by prefixation only. It uses the class 13 prefix KA- for diminutive singular and βu-, a form of the class 14 prefix for diminutive plural.

e.g. [cice:lo] 'a broom' [kake:lo] 'a small broom'

[mulyaŋgo] 'a door' [kalyaŋgo] 'a small door'

[iɱbusi] 'a goat' [kaβusi] 'a small goat'

plural:

[βuβwe:lo] 'small brooms'

Brown (1972:11-12) also lists an example of a derogatory use of the diminutive:

> "The diminutive and augmentative genders carry no derogatory meaning in the above example, since no separate lexical items exist to express 'a small door' or 'a large door'. If, however, a separate lexical item does exist, as in the case of [iɱbusi] 'a goat', [iɱe:me] 'a kid goat', then reclassification does carry a derogatory meaning, as in [kaβusi] 'a small (undergrown) goat'."

Tette & Sena

These two related dialects use ka- for diminutive singular and tu- for diminutive plural:

pîri	'hill'	kapiri	'hillock'
tsâmba	'leaf'	kadzámba	'small leaf'
shimãzi	'river', 'large water'	kamãdzi	'rivulet'
nyumba	'a house'	kanyumba	'a hut'
tumadzámba	'small leaves'[1]		

(all examples from Bleek 1971:169)

Otyihererό

According to Bleek(1971:197) this language employs more noun-classes than any other Bantu language.

To express diminutives it uses the ka- prefix in the singular.

e.g. omundu	'the person'[2]	okandu	'the little person'
ontu	'the sheep'	okaðu	'the little sheep'
ondyuo	'the house'	okandyuo	'the little house'
omatye	'the child'	okanatye	'the little child'
ontera	'the bird'	okaðera	'the little bird'
onpuka	'the animal'	okapuka	'the little animal'

Diminutives can also be formed from verbs:

nyengua	'hate'	okanye	'small hate'
ðuva	'hear', 'understand'		
+			
okutui	'ear' >	okaðuvatui	'good, sharp hearing'

(examples from Rath, as reported by Bleek 1971:197-202)

Nearly all personal names in Otyihererό have this ka- prefix, thus suggesting a hypocoristic use of the diminutive class. We find, however, that all these names belong to the class 1 prefix mu-, rather than the class 14. This suggests that their hypocoristic sense has been lost and that they have become lexicalised in the class 1, "people" class of nouns.

Plurals are formed by prefixing u-,[3] a form of the class 12 prefix (TU-).

e.g. okakambe 'the little horse' oukambe 'the little horses'

ounatye 'the little children'

ouðera 'the little birds'

oupuka 'the little animals'

Southern Bantu

There are a number of Bantu languages, all of them in the Southern Branch which use special diminutive suffixes; as Bleek (1971:293) explains:

> "Classes may also disappear, because the derivative particles, which in the first instance constituted them, cease to be employed. In this manner the 13th (KA-) class is unknown in the South Eastern Branch languages, diminutives being formed here exclusively by suffixes (-ana, -anyana, etc) and not by the prefix KA-, so commonly used for the same purpose in the Middle Branch."

As mentioned by Bleek, this suffix takes the form -(ay)ana,[4] as the following example from Seɧapi illustrates:

ɳku 'sheep' kuana 'lamb'

the diminutive here serves to denote the young of an animal. The same suffix is used in the plural; plural being marked by the class prefix: li‿ɳku 'sheep' (pl) likuana 'lambs' (Bleek 1971:295)

In most southern Bantu languages this suffix is linked with the phenomenon of palatalisation of labials.[5] This is illustrated with examples from Xhosa and Tsonga.

Xhosa

Xhosa uses both -ana and -nyana in a two stage diminutive system:[6]

usana, umntwana	'child', 'baby'	umntwanyána	'tiny child'
umntu	'person', 'man'	umntwana	'child'

In fact, the suffix is commonly used to denote the young of an animate being, as the above example shows; also:

ínkôsi	'chief'	ínkósána	'chief's son'

The role of the prefix has been lost completely. Palatalisation of bilabials takes place in the vast majority of diminutive nouns.

e.g. umlomo	'mouth'	umlonyana	'small mouth'
uzipho	'nail'	uzitshana	'small nail'
ubuhlwempu	'poverty'	ubuhlwentshana	'bit of poverty'
ihlobo	'summer'	ihlotyana	'summeriness'
isibipha	'very ugly person'	isibitshana	'little ugly person'
ipoma	'conspicuous object'	ipomana	'somewhat conspicuous object'

The last example shows no palatalisation. It is also another example of a diminutive which detracts from a quality inherent in the meaning of the noun rather than refering to a smaller version of that which is denoted by the noun. (examples from Louw 1975/6: 244-5).

Palatalisation seems, in the minds of some speakers, to have taken on a meaning element itself: "It seems as if some speakers give different shades of meaning to the diminutive with a palatalisation against one which retains the bilabial." (Louw:ibid, footnote). The vast majority of nouns with monosyllabic stems are not affected by palatalisation. Louw therefore concludes that Xhosa is still in the middle of this as yet incomplete sound-change.

Tsonga

As far as palatalisation of bilabials is concerned, the situation is similar in Tsonga. Here the prefix still plays a role in the formation of diminutives, though. The prefix used is xi-, a form of the class 7 prefix.

e.g. nkhuvo 'feast' xinkhubyana 'little feast'
xipfinbo 'kind of cork' xipfimbyana 'small cork'
ntlhavo 'awl' xintlhabyana 'small awl'

The example of xipfimbo shows the advantage of the suffix, namely that a noun in class 7 can also be diminutivised. If a noun is used with a class 8 prefix (swi-) and a diminutive suffix it indicates a small quantity i.e. it is a mass noun. (Louw 1975/6:250).

e.g. tsavu 'vegetable' switsabyana 'some vegetables'

Palatalisation is rare with the final syllable -mba:

ximjumba 'bunch' xijumbana 'small bunch'

Also -vi is only rarely palatalised:

mavivi 'sweeping' swivivana 'some sweepings'
havi 'castrated animal' xihabyana 'little castrated animal'

Those few words which end in -p are not subjected to palatalisation either:

e.g. kunupu[7] 'button' xikunupana 'small button'

(all the above examples are from Louw 1975/6:248-9).

Hottentot

In Hottentot (Nama dialect) diminutives are expressed by a suffix, which is placed between the root of the noun and its inflexional suffixes.[1] This diminutive suffix takes the form -ro- or -re-.[2]

e.g. a χa-p 'a youth' (root-masc sing)

a χa-ro-p 'little boy' (root-dim-masc sing)

a χa-ro-n 'little children' (root-dim-plu)

ani-p 'bird' (masc)

ani-s 'bird' (fem)

ani-ro-i 'little bird' (root-dim-common sing)

ʒkam-mi 'water'

ʒkam-ro-p 'a tear'

(examples from Bleek 1971:307-308)

Tibetan

In Tibetan, diminutives are formed by means of the suffixed particle -bu, which takes the following forms:

-ṅu, after final -ṅ

-nu " " -n

-ru " " -r

-lu " " -l

and -gu, usually after final -g. These allomorphs are the result of gemination of long final consonants (cf. Uray 1952:185). In addition there are the following forms: -u, used after -g, -r, -l and -'u, almost exclusively added to stems in -V. (cf. Uray:186; Zimmermann 1979:20; Tengyai & Tensang 1976:20). With this suffixed particle -'u there is usually a change in the vowel:

$$\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ o \end{Bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{Bmatrix} e \\ i \end{Bmatrix} \quad / \quad C___ \; 'u^{1}$$

e.g. bya 'bird' bye'u 'small bird'

byi'u 'small bird'

Which vowel is selected with which stem is largely lexicalised. Some words like bya allow both. The meaning of the particle is "A diminutive function when the suffix expresses the smaller size of a being or thing, a diminished degree of a quality, and a decrease in the intensity of a process." (Uray 1952:218)[2] -bu is productive with nouns, adjectives and verbal nouns. Also with some numerals, adverbs and pronouns. It is only fully productive with nouns/adjectives, which are not clearly distinguished in Tibetan. (Uray 1952:210)

e.g. khyo 'man, husband' khye'u 'boy' (Zimmermann 1979:147)

nor 'wealth, riches, cattle' nor-bu 'jewel' (ibid)

čhag-pa 'large bunch (of flowers, etc) čhag-bu 'small bunch'

sdoṅ-po 'trunk, stem of tree' sdoṅ-bu 'stick, small trunk'

zaṅs 'kettle, copper' zaṅs-bu 'small pot'

khron-pa 'a well' khron-bu 'small well'

rṅa 'battle drum' rṅe'u 'a small drum'

bu 'son, boy' bu-gu 'a small boy'

(Uray 1952:186)

The particle is also used to denote the young of animals, etc.

e.g. ba, ba-mo 'cow' be'u 'calf'

(Zimmermann 1979:186; Tengyai & Tensang 1976:20)

lug 'sheep' lug-gu, lu-gu 'lamb'

'dre 'demon, evil spirit' 'dre-bu 'a young devil'

(Uray 1952:185-6)

There are some other meanings connected with -bu, which are discussed in chapters 3 and 7. One of these may be illustrated by the following:

gžon-pa 'young' gžon-nu 'a youth'

kham 'brownish' kham-bu 'apricot, peach'

nal 'incest' nal-lu, nal-bu 'illegitimate child'

In these the derived form is somehow connected with or originating from the base form.

Diminutives are often used for endearment, especially with kinship and relational terms, domestic pets, etc.

e.g. nu-bo 'younger brother' nu'u 'younger brother + Dim'

zla-bo 'friend' zla'u 'friend + Dim'

khyi-gu 'puppy, dog'

khyi'u 'puppy, dog'

ži-mi 'cat' žim-bu 'cat + Dim'

(Zimmermann 1979:206)

A few other lexical categories form diminutives too.

e.g. šub-pa 'to speak in a low voice' šub-bu 'whispering'[3]
(Uray 1952:185)

da 'now, at present, just' da'ur 'suddenly, instantly'
(Uray 1952:211)

gčig 'one' gčig-pu 'alone, single, only; bare, naked'[4]

(Zimmermann 1979:199)

With verbs it has the sense of protraction, repetition, continuation of an activity or process, hence:

ñug-pa 'to protrude, to stretch out'
⌄
ñu-gu 'worm' (lit: 'a small thing repeatedly stretching itself')

(Uray 1952:213)

As well as -bu, Tibetan uses an analytic diminutive, by means of the stem chuṅ/thuṅ[5] 'small'.

e.g. chuṅ ba 'something/someone small' (Zimmermann 1979:23)

chuṅ ṅu 'something/someone very small' i.e. chuṅ+Dim
(Zimmermann 1979:48)

ba glaṅ chuṅ ba 'a small ox' (Zimmermann 1979:50)

This is sometimes combined with the suffixed particle.

e.g. mi 'man, human' mi'u 'a small man, dwarf'

mi'u-thuṅ 'a small man, dwarf'

(Uray 1952:202)

Tibetan uses honorifics productively. These have become quite separate from the diminutive, except in the following lexicalised example:[6]

ṅan-bu 'my humble little self' (ṅan-pa 'bad, miserable, poor)
(Uray 1952:210)

Ngiyambaa

In Ngiyambaa, an Aboriginal language of Western New South Wales, the diminutive and augmentative suffixes express both number and diminutive or augmentative at the same time. In addition, the diminutive semantic area is covered by two suffixes in the singular. One of these is a "pure" diminutive and the other one refers to 'immature' people or animals:

	singular	plural
diminutive	-DHul	-galga:N-
'immature'	-ga:	
augmentative	-bidi (T) -giran (K)	-gala:n-

(Donaldson 1980:99; T and K refer to different dialects)

e.g. dhudhubaynj-djul mayi 'little honey-eater fellow'

(honeyeater - DIM person)

miri-ga: 'puppy'

(dog - immature)

girbadja-ga: 'joey'

(kangaroo - IMM)

winar-ga: 'girl'

(woman - IMM)

dhu:r-ga: 'boy'

(man - IMM)

If the animal in question is small in relation to its age, an extra diminutive suffix may be added:

miri-ga:dhul 'little puppy'

(Donaldson 1980:100)

The plural suffix -galga:N- refers to both 'a number of young things' or 'a number of immature things':

miri-galga:N- 'a number of small dogs' or

'a number of puppies'

In relation to the augmentative plural suffix -gala:n, -galga:N- is the least marked for size. It can therefore be used to indicate plurality without reference to size. Ngiyambaa also has a syntactic diminutive. This uses adjectives meaning 'small' and 'young'. The syntactic augmentative uses adjectives meaning the opposite.

e.g. bubay 'small'

babir 'large'

dhalaŋay 'fresh, new, young'

marayibiyaN- 'old'

As in many other languages, the suffixed diminutives have affective and emoticnal connotations which the syntactic diminutives, using adjectives lack. In the case of the augmentatives a similar division exists. The suffixed diminutives express a certain emotional attachment and the suffixed augmentatives a certain "emotional distaste" (Donaldson 1980:102). As in other languages size has become secondary to emotional expressiveness, as Donaldson explains: "The suffixes can be used for their affective meaning with relative disregard for their literal meaning" (ibid).

The Americas

Quechua

Quechua uses many diminutives, especially in certain domains. They are formed by means of suffixes. Some dialectal differences do occur and I will consider two dialects; those of Cuzco and Ayacucho.

Cuzco[1]

The most common diminutive suffix in Cuzco Quechua is -cha (or -ča).[2] It is productive on nouns, adjectives and pronouns.

e.g.	wasi	'house'	wasicha	'little house'
	runa	'man'	runacha	'little man'
	wawa	'baby'	wawacha	'little baby'

(Cusihuaman 1976:227)

	asno	'donkey, ass'	asnocha	'little donkey'
	rato	'moment'	ratocha	'a short moment'
	mama	'mother'	mamacháy	'my little mother (vocative)'

kay ñančan urqumanqa ris-kan 'this little road goes to the mountain'

(Solá, Tupac Yupanqui et al. 1972:2.11)

hatun	'big, large, great'	hatuncha	'big, large, great + Dim'
huch'uy	'small'	huch'uycha	'small + Dim'

This suffix can also be used to form hypocoristics.

e.g. Imillu - Imillucha 'Emilio' (Cusihuaman 1976:227)

luwisačan sutiyqa 'my name is Luisita' (Solá, Tupac Yupanqui et al. 1972:2.11)

Another frequently used suffix is -lla (-l̃a). Solá, Tupac Yupanqui et al. (1972:2.10) list this under the heading "diminutives" and they say that it may be translated as 'little'. They do distinguish it from -cha though and they state that the meaning of -lla

"... may be less literal, often merely adding a measure of courtesy or politeness to the expression". In fact, most scholars refer to it as a limitative suffix,[3] which could be rendered as 'merely, just, only', etc. This sense does make it in some way similar to a diminutive, which is also often used to limit the scope, meaning or size in some way.

e.g. runatunallan 'only the men' (... are allowed to take part in this ceremony)

huch'uylla 'this small amount only'

-lla is frequently combined with -cha to form a kind of reinforced or double diminutive.

This -challa double suffix makes it more affectionate as well.

e.g. kunan 'nowadays, at this moment' kunachallan 'at this very moment + Dim'

(Cusihuaman 1976:227)

pisi 'little' pisichalla 'only a little'

sumaq 'beautiful' sumaq sipas 'a nice girl'

but: sumaqchalla sipas 'a very beautiful+Dim girl'

sumaqchallatan 'oh, very nicely'

ch'ukllachalla 'a kind of small haystack' (ch'uklla 'hut, shack')

The synthetic diminutive is frequently accompanied by the adjective huch'uy 'small'.

e.g. huch'uy camionchan 'small lorry+Dim' (-n is an emphatic suffix)

Sometimes an analytic diminutive is used to refer to small size only.

e.g. huchuk ñan 'a small road, path'

-cha, as we have seen is primarily a diminutive suffix, even though it does form hypocoristics too. Two other suffixes, -ku/-ka are primarily used to form hypocoristics and diminutives of kinship terms.

e.g. Rosa - Rosaku

Ana - Anaku

Josi - Josiku

Juli - Julika

Bernaku and Elaku are two of the three sons of Thunder.

mama	'mother'	mamaka	'mummy'
		mamaku	'little old woman'
sipa	'girl'	sipaku	'little girl'
qosa	'husband'	qosaku	'little husband'

chana - chanaku 'youngest boy in the family'

panay anakun kurahniykuqa[4] 'my sister Anita is the eldest of us'
(Solá et al. 1970:12.7)

Some nouns and proper names take -ka and others take -ku, but why one and not the other is not clear; it seems to be purely lexicalised.

In some cases, as with mama, a difference in meaning exists, but this is rare on the whole. These suffixes may be used outside the family to "add an affectionate tone" (Solá, Tupac Yupanqui et al. 1970:12.7).

e.g. rihsinkiču čahay taytakuta ? 'do you know that little old man?'

Sometimes -ku/-ka is combined with -cha to form a reinforced or double diminutive e.g. mamakucha 'little old woman + Dim'

We have already seen that Quechua contains many Spanish loans (asno, camion, etc.) In spoken Cuzco Quechua, Spanish diminutive suffixes can also often be heard, e.g.

animalcito, mamita, Tomasito.

Some of the domains in which Quechua diminutives are used have already been indicated by the examples given so far. They seem to be as follows:

- hypocoristics and kinship terms

e.g. Elenaku, Don Diegocha

- (domestic) animals:

e.g. urpicha 'little dove'

pajarochakuna 'little birds' (kuna is a plural marker)

llamacha 'little llama'

- familiar objects, tools, etc.

e.g. huch'uychakuna 'little small ones' (talking about "mosquito" guns)

lawa 'corn-meal porridge' lawacha

idolo 'idol' idolacha

- environmental phenomena:

e.g. ñeqwi 'a herb' ñeqwicha 'a small abount of ñeqwi'

ñan 'a road' ñanča 'little road, path'

- diminutives can also be used to play down, plead, placate and for specific reverential purposes.

e.g. Ch'ulla-lla sarachamanta mihuq masichallay maypitaq kashanki ?

'where are you, my only little companion(f) with whom I would share even a single little grain of corn (maize)?' (Cusihuaman 1976:255)

... taytacha Milagrochá... '...could it be a miracle of God+Dim'

chaychakunatan apamuni...chitachaypa 'I bring this small amount ... of my little sheep for food'

- it is also often used in poetry (for endearment) and in religious writings like the catechism (placating, reverential).

e.g. sonqochallay 'little heart' (vocative)

A verbal suffix -kacha may be related to diminutive -cha. It signifies that the action is realised with interruptions, changes of direction, or repeatedly.

e.g. qhawa-kacha-y 'to look in all directions' (Qhaway 'to look')

kumpa-kacha-y 'to fall down all the time'

rit'i-kacha-y 'to snow with interruptions'

(Cusihuaman 1976:199)

Ayachucho

The situation is very similar in the Ayacucho dialect, which was analysed by Parker (1969).

/-ča/ is used "with high frequency in polite and intimate address" (60).

e.g. /wasi/ 'house' /wasiča/ 'little house'

/warmi/ 'woman, wife, female' /warmiča/ 'little woman, female child'

/amigu/ 'friend' /amiguča/ 'good friend'

In some idioms a reduplicated /-ča/ can be found. These seem to have an intensifying effect.

e.g. /čikačačan/ 'very greatly'

/čikačačaq/ 'enormous'

/l̃iwčačan/ 'every last one'

If /-ča/ is added to a verb it indicates an action performed by a child or in the manner of a child. By extension it can be used in intimate address (66).

e.g. /pukl̃a-/ 'to play' /pukl̃ačan/ 'he (the child) plays'; 'he plays like a child'

Parker (1969:59-60) does not refer to /-l̃a/ as a diminutive suffix, but he does discuss it with the diminutive /-ča/ under "restrictive suffixes", explaining that it "is very common in polite and apologetic speech", which is in itself a diminutive domain (see above). He also gives an example where /-l̃a/ clearly serves to intensify the the diminutive /-ča/; e.g. /mamal̃ača/ 'a little old woman'.

So this suffix seems to function in the same way in Ayacucho as it does in neighbouring Cuzco.

The -ka/-ku suffixes are apparently rare in Ayachucho. Parker (1969:98) mentions them under "Irregular Substantive Derivation":

-ka: /sipas/ 'girl' /sipaka/ 'girl' (deprecatory)

-ku: "is a deprecatory and affectionate diminutive, regular in the Cuzco dialect"

e.g. /mama/ 'woman, mother, Madam' /mamaku/ 'old woman'

/tayta/ 'father, gentleman' /taytaku/ 'old man'

/wayta/ 'flower' /waytaku/ 'penis' (vulgar)

These suffixes as well as being much rarer than in the Cuzco dialect have certain negative connotations, which they lack in Cuzco.

Guarani

Guaraní expresses diminutives by means of two fully productive suffixes -MĨ́ and -ʔĺ. Both occur with nouns, verbs and adverbs. Both express a diminutive sense, but -MĨ́ has specialised by having stronger emotional connotations than -ʔĺ. These are also among the few Amerindian suffixes in our data to use high front vowels (cf. Chapter 5).

e.g. šẽ-kunuʔṹ-mĨ́ 'my little love' (from: kunuʔṹ 'love')

mitã̀-ʔĺ 'small child' (mitã́ 'child')

megwè-mĨ́ 'slowly, slowly' (megwé 'slowly')

(examples from Gregores & Suarez 1967:128)

Maya

Maya is one of a small number of languages around the world, but mainly in the Americas, which use some form of reduplication to form diminutives (cf. Chapter 4). Tozzer (1921), who reports on the dialect of Yucatan gives the following examples:

kah	'pueblo'	ka-kah	'small pueblo'
sak	'white'	sa-sak	'medio blanco'[5]
nohotš, noh	'great'	no-nohotš, no-noh	'grandecillo'[6]

(Tozzer 1921:34, 97)

He does say, however (38) that the use of the analytic diminutive by means of the adjective tšan 'little'[7] is more common.

e.g. tšan peq 'small dog'

Another way of forming an analytic diminutive is by using hătš 'very' or qas 'bad' as intensifiers.

e.g. tšitšan 'small'

qas tšitšan 'rather śmall'; 'medio chico'

hătš tšitšan 'very small'

From the examples Tozzer gives we can deduce the following. In Maya both nouns and adjectives can form diminutives and it is the first syllable of the root which is reduplicated. Reduplication is a relatively rare process in Maya, although it is used for purposes other than diminutive formation. It is not clear, though whether diminutives have affective connotations. Tozzer's use of 'small' rather than 'little' would suggest not. The use of the diminutive suffix in the Spanish glosses, however, would suggest they do have affective connotations.

Aztec

In the Milpa Alta dialect of Aztec as reported on by Whorf (1946) diminutives are divided into two major areas, which will be discussed separately.

Diminutive

The diminutives, formed by suffixation cover most of the normal diminutive uses of endearment, contempt, etc. The suffixes used for this are -ton and -pil. In certain words, an additional -λi[8] is added to these suffixes. In Milpa Alta, only -ton is widely used. In some cases the stem is shortened before the suffix is added.

e.g. siwanton 'girl' (siwa.λ 'woman')

pilton λi 'boy'

(Whorf 1946:383)

To intensify the diminutive force the stem can be reduplicated.

e.g. pipilton λi 'little boy'

sisiwanton 'little girl'

Reduplication of both stem and suffix is used to form the plural.

e.g. pipiltoton 'boys'

sisiwantoton 'girls'

Reverential

The reverentials in Aztec can best be compared with the pleading and placating use of diminutives in other languages. They have "... a sort of diminutive sense for which the term "diminished augmentative' may be used. It implies that a thing is great but the speaker's contact with it is of diminished degree, modest, humble. Used of a person or his possessions it thus implies respect" (Whorf 1946:378).

These reverentials are formed by means of the suffix -cin(-λi) on nouns.[9]

e.g. mo-kalcin 'your house+Rev'

But: no-kal 'my house', as it is impolite to use a reverential of oneself, except where kinship or social relationships are concerned; e.g. no-nancin 'my mother'. In Milpa Alta, the use of the reverentials has become equivalent to the Spanish use of the "V-form" Usted. They can also be used with natural phenomena and Whorf (1946:378) assumes that this may be taken to refer to the fact that "... a small portion of some great and widespread phenomenon is being dealt with".

e.g. a.λ 'water' (in general)

a.cinλi 'water' (in domestic use or in a tank or well)

tonal-li 'sun, daytime, light'

tonal-cinλi 'a day' (ibid)

Whorf (1946:383) also refers to an affective use of these reverentials.

e.g. λe-cinλi 'a fire'

Sometimes adjectives take this affective -cin. Whorf (ibid) explains this as an imitation of Spanish. This is usually combined with reduplication of the stem only.

e.g. kᵛalli 'good' kᵛakᵛalcin 'pretty' (cf. Spanish bonito)

The augmentative suffix -pol of Classical Nahuatl does not seem to have survived in the Milpa Alta dialect.

North America

The great variety of diminutive types in North america will be illustrated by means of a short survey of the diminutive in a few languages spoken along the Pacific Coast and its hinterland (Nez Perce is the furthest East; in Oregon - Idaho).

Tlingit

Tlingit uses suffixation to form its diminutives. "Smallness is indicated by suffixing -k!° or -k!ʷ "[10] (Boas 1911:I:168).

e.g. xîxtc!î'k!° 'little frog' (xîxtc! 'frog')

ā 'lake' āk!ʷ 'little lake'

An example of a lexicalised diminutive given by Boas is Atk!A'tsk!° 'a small boy'. Boas states about the use of diminutives that it "is used much with terms of relationship, sometimes probably in an endearing sense..." He gives the following examples of kinship diminutives:

cxAnk!ʷ	'grandchild'	sīk!ʷ	'daughter'
ɬIɬk!ʷ	'grandparent'	kêɬk!ʷ	'nephew; niece'
Lak!ʷ	'little mother; mother's sister'		

(ibid)

Quinault

Another language which uses suffixes to form diminutives is Quinault. It is one of very few Salish dialects to do so. The suffix used is -ō and it is accompanied by a vowel-change in the stem. This change involves either a doubling of the vowel with an intermediate glottal stop or a glottal stop only.

e.g. qa'yis	'stone'	qa'aisō	'stone+Dim'
sī'pɬEn[11]	'axe'	sī'pɬE'nō	'axe+Dim'

In a few cases the suffix is not used at all:

e.g. tcī4 'high' tcī'ī4 'high+Dim'

(Haeberlin 1918:164)

Kwakiutl

Diminutive formation in Kwakiutl involves a complex set of processes:

> "The diminutive is formed by the suffix -Em,[11] which softens the terminal consonant; and by reduplication with ā vowel. Generally the stem is reduplicated, but in cases of ambiguity the whole word may be reduplicated."

(Boas 1911:526)

e.g.	g·ōk"	'house'	g·ā g·ogum	'little house'
	gwēg·-	'whale'	gwā'gwēg·îm	'little whale'
	g'in4-	'child'	g·ā'g·înlEm	'little child'
	bEk"-	'man'	bā'bagum	'boy'
	me'gwat	'seal'	mā'mēgwadEm	'little seal'
	ts!Edā'q	'woman'	ts!ā'ts!EdāgEm	'little woman'

If an additional -a suffix is added to one of these diminutive forms they are used to express the idea of 'to play with'.

e.g. sā'sewuma 'to play paddling' (se'xwa, sēx" 'to paddle')

(ibid)

Yokuts

Consonantal symbolism is no longer a productive method for forming diminutives in Yokuts, although some examples survive, especially in kinship terms and a few other areas.

e.g.	gudi?	'small'	guçi?	'tiny' (Yawelmani dialect)
	godi?da	'small'	goči?ča	'little, tiny' (Chawchilla dialect)

(Gamble 1975:306)

Nowadays the suffix -aẏ is the principal diminutive marker. A number of different shifts may accompany the suffix:

- dental stop → affricate

e.g. ʔa·xid - ʔaxčaẏ 'daughter' (Wĭkchammi dialect)

napa·tim - napaçmaẏ 'son-in-law' (Koyeti dialect)

(Gamble 1975:307)

In the Wikchammi dialect there seems to have been a tendency to glottalize these affricates. In Koyeti two parallel shifts seem to have been used:

- dental stop → dental affricate

dental stop → alveolar affricate

And also:

- resonant → glottalized stop

e.g. po·lum - put'omt'as 'husband' (Gamble 1975:307)

Many of these forms exist side-by-side with the same meaning.

e.g. mokiẏ - mokt'os 'wife'

mokčoy 'wife'

In some cases, however, a different meaning did develop.

e.g. no·ño? 'man' no·t'o? 'boy'

no·čo? 'handsome man' (Gamble 1975:308)

As consonant symbolism became less productive, the diminutives became, as it were, less marked. As a result many old diminutive forms have become interchangeable with their non-dim. counterparts.

e.g. kat'ap', kačaṗ (+ Dim) 'stepdaughter'

Nez. Perce

In Nez Perce consonantal symbolism is still productive for diminutive formation. The shifts used are:

- n > l
- s > c
- k > q

and in addition there is a vowel shift: e > a. This is in fact a regular alternation in the Nez Perce vowel-harmony system, although it occurs in diminutives without any other conditioning factor. (Nichols 1971:843). In some words the sound shift is accompanied by reduplication.

e.g.	ʔini.t	'house'	ʔili.t	'doll house'
	sik'em	'horse'	ciq'a.mqal	'dog'
	ke.tis	'spear'	katicka.tic	'toy spear'

As well as expressing a diminutive in its widest sense - endearing as well as belittling - these shifts express a kind of unreality or artificiality. In addition they serve as a marker of first-person possessed nouns as opposed to other-person possessed nouns.

e.g.	ʔiṁi.s	'your mother'	ne?i.c	'my mother'

(ibid)

Bella Coola

In Bella Coola, a Salish language, the diminutive is formed by means of a large number of processes - many of them outlined above - all working together to create an exceptionally complex diminutive system. Diminutives in Bella Coola are formed by reduplication of various types, consonant changes, vowel changes, and suffixation. The latter by means of the following suffixes:

-ø added after i or y; e.g. xixi 'marten' xi.xi-ø 'marten-Dim'

-ni added after the nominalising suffix -ta and some other stems in -a;

e.g. ?acta 'paddle' ?act-ni 'paddle+Dim'

-y used with other stems in -a; e.g. cna 'stinging nettle' cncna-y Dim.

-i is used with all stems not ending in -i, -y, or -a.

e.g. k'nc 'whale' nk'nc 'whale+Dim' (newman 1971:35)

The consonant changes used in Bella Coola are the following:

- velar fricative > velar stop (x̣ → q ; x^{w} → q^{w}); e.g. ?asa.lx̣i - ?asa.lqi-ø 'nape of the neck'.

- prepalatal, labiopalatal, velar or labiovelar stop > fricative (k → x, k' → x, k^{w} → x^{w}, k'^{w}→ x^{w}, q → x̣, q^{w} → x̣^{w}); e.g. q^{w}als 'fir tree needles' - q^{w}a. x^{w}ls-i.

- prepalatal or velar stop > labialised stop (k → k^{w}, k̓ → k̓^{w}, q̇ → q̇^{w}); e.g. ɬuq̇aɬt 'cedarbark' - ɬuɬq̇^{w}a.ɬt-i (Newman 1971:35)

Vowel changes are limited to various changes in vowel length, affecting different vowels in the stem.[12] Bella Coola uses initial, medial and final reduplication.[13] Some of these include the insertion of a vowel (i, a, u) or <n> or <x> On the whole it is impossible to predict phonologically which processes are used with which stem, so that we must assume that this complicated system is largely lexically conditioned. Newman (1971) lists various kinds of reduplication and these add up to more than 30 types. I will only outline a few of these to illustrate the general principles involved:

Initial reduplication may involve one, two, three or four sounds.

e.g.	xnas	'woman'	xixna.s-i	'woman+Dim'
	ni.x^{w}	'fire'	nini.q^{w}-i	'fire+Dim'
	k̓^{w}uxani	'oyster'	k̓^{w}u.xk̓xani-ø	'oyster+Dim'
	sx^{w}paniɬ	'deer'	sx^{w}pa.pni.ɬ-i[14]	'deer+Dim'

(Newman 1971:36-37)

Medial reduplication is of two types. It involves the repetition, initially, of a medial vowel.

e.g.	q̓ay	'basket'	ʔa.q̓ay-ø	'basket+Dim'
	k'inax̌	'crab'	ʔik'na.x̌-i[15]	'crab+Dim'

Final reduplication usually involves the repetition of two sounds. Although final reduplication of 3 sounds does occur, it is rare.

e.g.	tq̓ɬa	'knife'	tqɬa.ɬa-y	'knife+Dim'(Newman 1971:37)
	k̓paɬ	'liver'	k̓pa.ɬpɬ-i	'liver+Dim'
	ʔapsuɬ	'house'	ʔapsu.sɬ-i	'house+Dim'
	ʔanux̣̌um	'river'	ʔanux̌u.x̣̌um-i	'river+Dim'

(Newman 1971:38)

In addition to the diminutive systems just outlined, there are a number of phenomena in the Pacific North West which deserve some consideration at this point. Some languages in the area express their diminutives by methods not encountered in the languages discussed so far.

Snohomish for example as well as using reduplication for most of its diminutives, forms the diminutive of a few words by means of a vowel-change only; e.g.

	spō'kab	'hill'	spo'ᵒ'kʷab	'hill+Dim'
	yixʷEla'	'eagle'	yi'ixʷEla	'eagle+Dim'

(Haeberlin 1918:166)

In Kalispelm a diminutive prefix is used, often, though not always accompanied by reduplication. This prefix is ɬ-.

e.g.	smo'mshin	'mare'	sɬmo'mshin	'mare+Dim'
	moko	'mountain'	ɬmm'ko	'mountain+Dim'

(Haeberlin 1918:162)

In a few languages specialised suffixes have developed to cover areas otherwise covered by diminutives. In this way, Thompson and Shuswap use <immature> suffixes to refer to the young of an animal or human. This suffix takes the form -ē'Et in Thompson and -Elt in Shuswap.

e.g. Thompson: ṣnō'ya 'beaver' ṣnōyahē"Et 'young beaver'

ṣnōyaḥē'hē'Et 'small young beaver'

(Haeberlin 1918:157)

Shuswap: sLEmka'lt 'daughter' sLEmqa'kElt 'young daughter' (Haeberlin 1918:160)

In Yurok one suffix, -os, is only used on kinship terms. Haas (1970: 89) believes this may represent an archaic diminutive suffix:

e.g. pičowos 'grandfather'

kokos 'mother'

čimos 'uncle'

tulos 'aunt'

Footnotes

English and Scots

1. Could we be dealing here with the same suffix -ie, but stressed and lengthened?

2. The OED does list roomette.

3. Marchand (1969:289) explains that the spelling -ette rather than -et is a 19th century innovation, spelling is thus the only difference. On its stress I refer also to Bauer (1983:119ff).

4. From -ing, cf. Rotzoll (1910), pp.266-7.

5. A more recent form nymphette 'a young nymphomaniac' also exists. The word was originally coined by Nabokov in Lolita.

6. For 1900-2000 the situation seems to be continuing unchanged; allowing for the increasing influence of Standard (Southern) English.

7. cf. Section on Irish.

8. cf. also footy (+ -y suffix) for Australian Rules Football, used in the Southern states; Aussie for Australian, etc.

9. There is some controversy as to the origin of this -s suffix, with Sundén (1904) favouring the genitive -s and Langenfelt (1941) favouring a plural -s as its ancestor. Neither view considers the fact, though that this suffix seems to be a Germanic phenomenon. It also occurs in Dutch, Danish, German, Swedish and Frisian.

10. Quoted from the Concise Oxford Dictionary, 6th edition, 1976.

11. Kruisinga (1942:448ff) compares the use of little specifically with the Dutch diminutive suffixes. See also 3.2.1 of this thesis.

12. In French, however, where diminutive suffixes are less productive she is le petit Chaperon rouge.

13. From Dutch pink 'little finger'; cf. Murison(1977:53).

14. Rotzoll (1910:301ff) lists bourock with bannock etc. under the "Zweifelhafte Deminutive".

15. This may be due to the confusion that might be created with the adjectivising -y, if a diminutive were to be added to an adjective, logically (cf. Chapter 8) the next category to form diminutives after nouns. As it is, an Adj + ie becomes a noun, or probably already is a noun before the suffix is added e.g. dear - dearie.

West Frisian

1. I am using this term as referring to the dialects of Frisian as spoken in the Dutch province of Friesland. For a discussion of diminutives in North Frisian I refer to Löfstedt (1958).

2. The spelling used throughout this section is that of the Frysk Wurdboek by Buwalda et al. (1971) for the Fryske Academy. In 1980 the spelling was changed somewhat and some writers use their own spelling, therefore differences may be encountered elsewhere.

3. cf. English -ette, Romanian -iţă etc.

Dutch

1. This is the course followed by Cohen (1958), Haverkamp-Lubbers & Kooij (1971), Ewen (1978), Booij (1981) etc.

2. This is to be read in relation to the aforementioned discussion in 6.1.

3. Both H-L & K (1971) and Ewen (1978) use /ɣ/. Other scholars might prefer /x/ and Cohen (1958) uses /χ/.

4. I class diphthongs as "long" - easily justified for Dutch and supported by most Dutch phonologists.

5. The doubling of the intervocalic consonant is a spelling convention. It signifies that the preceding vowel is "short".

6. In these cases too assimilation would palatalise the preceding segments ['xrɑɤ jə], ['kɑʃə].

7. In relation to this rule, the example of hemd 'vest' is interesting. In standard Dutch its diminutive is /hɛmpjə/, in parts of Holland it becomes /hɛmətjə/ with /ə/- insertion, and in other areas, /hɛmtjə/.

8. This is not just a length distinction but a quality distinction.

9. They also mention rad; for me its diminutive is: radertje (see below).

10. But: pad 'toad' - padje. Although Tiersma (1980:252) does not recognise a semantic difference between padje and paadje.

11. There is a difference in meaning here which is difficult to render in English.

12. ? Mariannetje sounds unusual to say the least.

13. I would like to thank J.W. Bol of Doetinchem, Netherlands, who provided this example.

14. According to Kruisinga (1942:45) these forms may be derived from a -sie suffix, although he does admit that an -s suffix could exist (47).

15. Kruisinga (1942:43-47) discusses hypocoristics and related forms in some detail.

16. Kloeke claims that the origin of this suffix lies in the West. In Kloeke (1929) he specifically mentions Utrecht as the originator. It is then supposed to have spread from there in an easterly and southerly direction. This is disputed by De Vries (1924, 1925, 1927, 1928, 1930, 1932).

17. Perhaps the term "umlaut" is not - strictly speaking - appropriate in this case which involves rounding and a slight raising rather than fronting.

18. In this example the /t/ has been reduced to /j/.

19. This looks like a hollandicism.

20. The term "Flemish" is sometimes used to refer to all the Belgian dialects of Dutch. I use it in its strict sense.

21. The most important are "urban frisian" spoken as the name suggests in the towns of Friesland (except Hindelopen, which has its own peculiar dialect) and the dialect of the island of Ameland, which uses the Frisian suffix -ke, e.g. bitke 'little bit' (de Vries 1928:107).

22. Van Albeda in De Jager (ed) Archief IV, gives -igje as the diminutive suffix for 't Bildt (de Vries 1927:107).

23. cf. Markey (1981:175).

Afrikaans

1. Because of final devoicing, these are both /t/ in final position and before the diminutive suffix.

2. I refer to the previous section for a more detailed analysis of this problem in Dutch and to Chapter VI.

3. cf. also Schultink(1974).

4. To some extent, these form diminutives in Dutch child language too e.g. ete ntjes doen 'eat + Dim do', but only in this construction of V + Dim DO (see also previous section).

5. In Dutch, any numeral + Dim becomes a noun e.g. in z'n eentje 'alone'.

German

1. The latter view is supported by Roger Lass (pers.comm.) and is borne out by, for example, plural formation, which is also accompanied by umlaut in many nouns: Haus - Häuser. In many languages, however there does seem to be a link between gender and diminutive (see Chapter 3). Steininger (1982:317) reports on umlaut alone being used to express a hypocoristic diminutive in some Bavarian dialects.

2. Schulte (1941) reports on a -t(s)ien/-t(s)ier suffix used in a small area around Olpe and Drolshagen in Lower Saxony. That suffix may also belong to this category.

3. In parts of Ostfriesland, the Frisian-Dutch suffix -(t)je is also found (cf. Wrede 1980:80ff).

4. When Schuhmacher gives /-ken/, this probably means /-k n/.

5. Realised as -i /i/ or -ü /y/ in some dialects (Keller 1961:244).

6. In standard German the same diminutive suffixes are used for singular and plural, thus: das Häuschen 'the little house'
die Häuschen 'the little houses'

7. Standard German also has the "diminutive" -l- for verbs; like the nominal suffix -l- it is accompanied by umlaut: lachen lächeln. It is not clear how productive these forms are in Standard German. They once existed in Dutch where only a few lexicalised examples survive. Their sense can be diminutive and/or iterative.

8. I also refer to the section on Yiddish in relation to this, as well as Landau (1896:51 & 57).

9. Klein is of course the common analytic diminutive 'small'; Kleinst is its superlative form.

Yiddish

1. Yiddish scholars use a number of different terms for these intensifiers; minutive (Birnbaum), imminutive (Beranek, Landau, Zuckerman), iminutive (Weinreich).
I prefer to use diminutive intensifier because it more clearly expresses what is meant and clearly links it with the normal diminutive.

2. M. Weinreich (1980) only mentions -ele; Birnbaum mentions both, but spells them -ely/-aly (despite the use of ע in the Yiddish spelling system. Landau (1896/7:47) uses the spelling -ali.

3. -lekh in M. Weinreichs YIVO-orthography.

4. A more regular, but far less common 'kindjes' also exists.

5. A more positive use of smekl is when talking to children, an area where most languages use diminutives frequently. (R. Lass, pers.comm.).

6. About its Slavic origin see Chapter 7.

7. Note that Beranek (1960:6) lists this as the general form of the suffix in Western-High German Yiddish.

8. This speaker was from Endingen in the north of Canton Aargau.

9. This example is from 1798, when it had not yet been completely absorbed by Dutch.

10. For a slightly more detailed treatment of these suffixes see Beranek (1960:8-9).

11. Landau (1896/7) gives more examples from Francfort-Yiddish (p.48) which also include some examples of seemingly intensified diminutives.

12. See also the section on German diminutives.

Danish and Icelandic

1. On the origin of this suffix - which seems to be fairly widespread in Germanic cf. Icelandic -s-, Dutch -s e.g. Paps, Mams etc. - I refer to Møller (1943), pp33ff. It is discussed briefly in 7.3.

2. '... the markedly emotional lille + Noun...'

3. Similar forms with stor 'big, large' also exist: Storesøster 'big sister' cf. Eng: grandfather etc.

4. Grönke has found only one example with this suffix: stelpa 'girl'.

5. There is also a suffix -bítur with a diminutive sense e.g. brauð-bítur 'a little bit of bread'.

Celtic

1. I am indebted for much of the data in this section to the members of the Department of Celtic, University of Edinburgh, especially Donald Meek, whose dialect is that of Tiree.

2. Compare this to Dutch standje (dim.) 'rebuke'.

3. This phenomenon is sometimes attributed to Norman influence (R. Clement, personal communication). O'Rahilly, however (1932:84) claims that -óg was borrowed from Welsh and -ín perhaps from Latin and he explains that the stress on these suffixes in Southern Irish was attracted by the long vowel, which they possessed already.

4. This example exists in Anglo-Irish as boreen. I refer to my section on English for a more detailed discussion of this suffix.

5. Bach can also mean 'soon'.

6. Off the South coast of Brittany opposite Lorient. The dialect spoken on the island is that of Low (i.e. Western) Vannetais.

7. Ternes' own notation.

Italian

1. Ettinger (1972; 1974) and Weiser (1979) refer to these as "Infix"; I prefer to use this less ambiguous term; see also 4.3.

Rhaetoromance

1. For a detailed discussion of this type I refer to Hasselrot (1943 and 1957).

2. Not strictly speaking a diminutive; -IT detracts as it were from the redness, so in a sense the redness is made smaller, attenuated. (cf. 3.11.2.).

3. Hasselrot (1957:85) derives the Friulan forms from Italian and explains the development as follows: -ACCIO →pl.-ACCI (Friulan has plurals in -S) → -ATS (dim plu) → -AT (dim sing).

4. "La fuorma sün -in exprima alch plü fin co quella sün -et" (Arquint 1964:101).

French

1. For these linking particles -l-, -n-, see below.

2. cf. Dauzat (1955:17), Hasselrot (1957:198; 1972:16-17).

3. cf. Hasselrot (1972:13ff; 1957:170, 175); Dauzat (1955:18).

4. cf. also petit-fils, etc. where petit has almost become a prefix, like Danish lille-/smaa-.

5. petit itself can also take a diminutive suffix: petitet 'tres peu' (Hasselrot 1957:175); petiot(e) (Hérisson 1956:38).

Occitan

1. -o is a feminine marker in Provençal.

2. Some suffixes change the gender; -on is masculine.

3. In fact some of the earliest attested diminutives in Occitan are adjectives in troubadour poetry e.g. probet 'tout près', sovendet 'tres souvent', suavet 'tout doucement', etc. (Hasselrot, 1957:245).

4. The suffix -on(e) is used in various Romance languages as augmentative (e.g. Spanish), or diminutive (e.g. Occitan), but it is far more common as an augmentative than as a diminutive suffix, which may be due to "sound-symbolism"(cf. Chapter 5).

5. Bayle (1957:184) mentions the -u/-udo, -aru/-arudo suffix for deriving nouns from adjectives as an augmentative, e.g. cambo 'leg' - cambaru or cambarudo 'someone with long legs'.

6. See footnote 2.

Catalan

1. I am indebted to Mr B.v. Maurik of Eindhoven, Netherlands for these examples.

Spanish

1. I am following Ettinger (1974;1980) in presenting the suffix without what is normally considered to be the gender marker e.g.:

cas	-it-	a
N	+ Dim	+ f

The suffixed -a(f) and -o(m) do indeed usually mark the gender; however there are quite a number of words where this is not the case:

la mano	(f)	>	manita
el poema	(m)	>	poemita

(cf. Amunátegui Reyes (1904:704/6); Gooch (1967:33); Jaeggli (1980:152); Rojas (1974:14-15) etc. on this point).

2. Note that Spanish has a separate group of pejorative suffixes.

3. cf. Italian and Portuguese.

4. Many scholars as well as the Real Academia Española do not consider these as separate particles. Instead they add them to the suffixes, thus creating an unnecessarily large number of these and disguising the fact that they are all derived from

-it-, -ill-

etc. (cf. Real Academia 1959:24-25).

5. cf. Chapter 5.

6. In fact all -t- suffixes have some diminutive sense. Unlike Castilian Spanish, however, -itu/-ita is comparatively rare (Malkiel 1970:48).

7. This linking -i- is fairly common in the Cabraniego dialect. Malkiel describes it as "intercalary" (37).

8. Alonso (1951:223) seems to be the only scholar to maintain that on these Carribean islands, -ic- is limited to certain environments only (see below).

9. I refer to Zamora Elizondo (1945) who challenges them.

10. This rule still existed in metropolitan Spanish in the 16th century and has survived in Latin America while it has disappeared in Spain.

11. So Alonso (1951:223) is overgeneralising when he suggests that Costa Rica uses -ico in all environments.

12. It is only natural, in view of the rules that -ic- should be the suffix used after -it-.

13. The virgin of Guadalupe has taken the place of Tonátzin, the mother-goddess whose name incorporates a reverential /-tsin/.

14. Due also perhaps to the "contact-language" phenomena, outlined in our section on Afrikaans.

Portuguese

1. cf. Wagner (1952:460)

2. Ettinger calls these "infix".

3. cf. also Susi Eisenberg (1952).

4. Hasselrot (1957:227) explains this as a diminutive and frequentative suffix -inhar.

5. There is also an adjective miudo 'small', used almost as frequently.

6. Hasselrot (1957:227) mentions that repetitions of the same suffix are more common in Brazil than in Portugal. However, Ettinger does not mention these.

7. This suffix may also be augmentative, in which case it does not combine with -ot-.

8. -aç-, -ão are augmentative suffixes.

9. This type of reduplication also has a diminutive-intensifying sense and is quite common in Portuguese.

Rumanian

1. He describes it slightly differently in that he takes the modified form and counts the first syllable of the suffix as the significant one; thus, joc-uleţ 'games + Dim' is "zweisilbig" (286) because -ul- forms the 2nd syllable.

2. cf. Hungarian, and Thun (1963) on English.

3. cf. Russian.

4. cf. English leatherette, etc.; also Chapters 3 and 7.

Papiamentu

1. it is perhaps interesting to note that Bahasa Indonesia has also borrowed this word in its Dim. form: karcis 'ticket' (< kaartjes 'ticket + Dim + Plu') (Arsath Ro'is, 1980:113).

Lithuanian

1. For Latvian diminutives, I refer to the very thorough study by Rūķe-Draviņa (1959) and to the next section.

2. This suffix is also used for words which show origin or possession: põnas 'gentleman' - ponaitis 'son of a gentleman' and also for collectives: alksnaitė 'alder forest' (cf. Chapter 7).

3. In fact, the analytic diminutive without any synthetic diminutive at all, is very rare in Lithuanian, which seems to have a marked preference for the use of synthetic constructions; thus 'very bad' is normally expressed by labaĩ negeraĩ, lit: 'very ungood', rather than labaĩ blogaĩ (cf. Brender 1925:85).

Slavic

1. Also known as Sorb, Lusatian, Wendish. Šwela (1952), on which this section is largely based, describes the Low Sorbian dialect, spoken in Lower Lusatia (Niederlausitz).

2. For the significance of this in relation to diminutives I refer to Chapter 5. However, this particular sound-shift is very widespread in Slavonic and is probably not directly linked with diminutives.

3. This is what slavicists know as "softening"; Šwela describes it as "... mit einem schwachen j-Nachklang..." (Šwela 1952:2).

4. Lee & Lee (1959:144) use the adjective 'small' to translate most diminutives, even though they state: "... often express affection or admiration rather than indicate smallness of the person or objects".

5. cf. Dutch kaartje 'ticket' from kaart 'card, post-card'.

6. Townsend (1968:L98) calls these "diminutives of the second degree".

7. To avoid certain consonant clusters extra vowels are inserted.

8. I assume that this means 'yellowish', but Townsend does not actually give glosses for the diminutive forms.

9. This is one of the first diminutive adverbs to be formed in most languages; cf. Dutch stilletjes 'silently', I also refer to Chapter 8 for a further discussion.

Basque

1. I am indebted for much of the information in this section to John Anderson of the Department of English Language, University of Edinburgh. Unless stated otherwise, any examples are his.

2. ‹tt› signifies a sound sequence approximating /tj/. Its voiced counterpart is ‹dd›.

3. ⟨x⟩ stands for /ʃ/ in Basque spelling.

4. Arotçarena uses ⟨ch⟩ for /ʃ/ as he works from French Euzkadi.

5. Many of the suffixes themselves include palatals of some sort. I also refer to Chapter 5 in relation to this point.

6. I refer to Chapter 8 for more about this point.

Hungarian and Lappish

1. Bánhidi et al. (1965:421) deny the possibility of forming hypocoristics with these suffixes when they claim that "they can be attached to all nouns (with the exception of Christian names)".

2. Compare this with similar formations in English discussed by Thun (1963).

3. cf. Chapter 5 of this thesis.

4. Also known as Lapp, Sa'amish, etc.

Semitic

1. These are sometimes classed as Hamitic languages or members of the Hamitic branch of Hamito-Semitic languages. Kramers (1949), however, treats them as normal members of the semitic family.

2. As reported in Littmann (1943:102).

3. Leslau also traces the ⟨e⟩ in 'are'ir back to an original -ay-.

4. For a similar quadruple diminutive type I refer to Italian.

5. This theory is discussed in 7.4.3.

6. These are words for which Littmann has been unable to find versions with a simple -at; it therefore has to be assumed that -atīt functions as a simple suffix in these cases.

7. This suffix is much more common in fact on nouns than on names, as we will see below.

Bantu

1. Note that the diminutive plural prefix is used in addition to the standard plural prefix ma- e.g. mapiri 'hills'; matsamba 'leaves'.

2. o- was originally equivalent to a definite article, although its use has become obligatory with a large number of nouns.

3. This u- prefix also occurs as a singular class prefix in Otyihererɔ, e.g. utuku 'night'.

4. For the possible origin of this suffix I refer to Chapter 7.

5. For more detailed descriptions of this phenomenon I refer to Louw (1975/76) and Ohala (1978).

6. -ana/-ane can also be used for mass nouns (cf. Louw 1975/76:243).

7. From Afrikaans knoop 'button'.

Hottentot

1. cf. Greenberg (1963:93) Universal 28.

2. The form -RE- occurs under the influence of vowel harmony, cf. Bleek, footnote pp. 120-121.

Tibetan

1. This looks like vowel harmony, which does not operate in modern Tibetan, but it may have done in the past. I have not been able to find any reference to it in any of the works studied.

2. For à more thorough analysis of the semantics of -bu I refer to 3.11.8 in this thesis.

3. Strictly speaking this is a noun in Tibetan.

4. cf. Dutch in z'n eentje, Spanish solito, Port. sɔ̀zinho, and Hung. kettecskén.

5. Different authors spell this differently; Uray uses thuṅ, Zimmermann chuṅ.

6. cf. reverentials in Aztec.

The Americas

1. I am indebted to Leslie Hogarth, formerly of the Department of Latin American Linguistics at the University of St. Andrews for much of the material in this section. Unless indicated otherwise, any examples were supplied by him.

2. It is important to distinguish this suffix from the verbalising suffix -cha, e.g. wasi > wasi-cha-y 'to build a house' (cf. Cusihuaman 1976:194; Parker 1969:62/3; Solá et al. 1970:12.3). And also from emphatic -chá and from -cha/-chá, used to express doubt. (cf. Cusihuaman:245; Parker:83; Dumēzil 1952:130).

3. cf. Cusihuaman (1976:255); Parker (1969:60).

4. The final -ku in -niyku- is a plural marker, kurah 'the eldest sibling', -niy- is possessive, first person and -qa is a topic marker.

5. i.e. 'half white', the use of a Spanish gloss in an otherwise English text is Tozzer's, so I have decided to leave it as it is.

6. i.e. 'great-Dim'

7. This is given in some lexicons as tši-tšan, tšan-tšan, etc. (Tozzer 1921:299).

8. Whorf (1946:371) describes /ƛ/ as an "alveolar, lateral, voiceless affricate". <c> stands for /ts/.

9. Reverential forms of verbs also exist, but these have no diminutive sense.

10. As far as I have been able to work out from Boas' description, this represents: palatal stop, fortis, with a "vocalic tinge of o, u" (so probably velarisation or glottalisation).

11. "E" seems to represent /ə/ in these early Americanists' writings.

12. These are outlined in detail in Newman (1971:35).

13. Reduplication is also used for continuatives in Bella Coola.

14. Initial reduplication of four sounds is rare (cf. Newman, 37).

15. Of this second type, involving a lengthening of the medial vowel, Newman only found one example.

Bibliographies

This work contains two separate bibliographies. The first, and most important is a bibliography of works on diminutives and closely related subjects. The main aim here has been completeness. I have used about half of the references given, but it was felt that as complete as possible a bibliography of diminutives studies would be valuable to any future researchers in this field. It has taken some five years to compile the list and it would be useful if in the future all this information was readily available.

The other bibliography, "Other Works Consulted", covers any works used and referred to that are not included in the bibliography of diminutives.

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